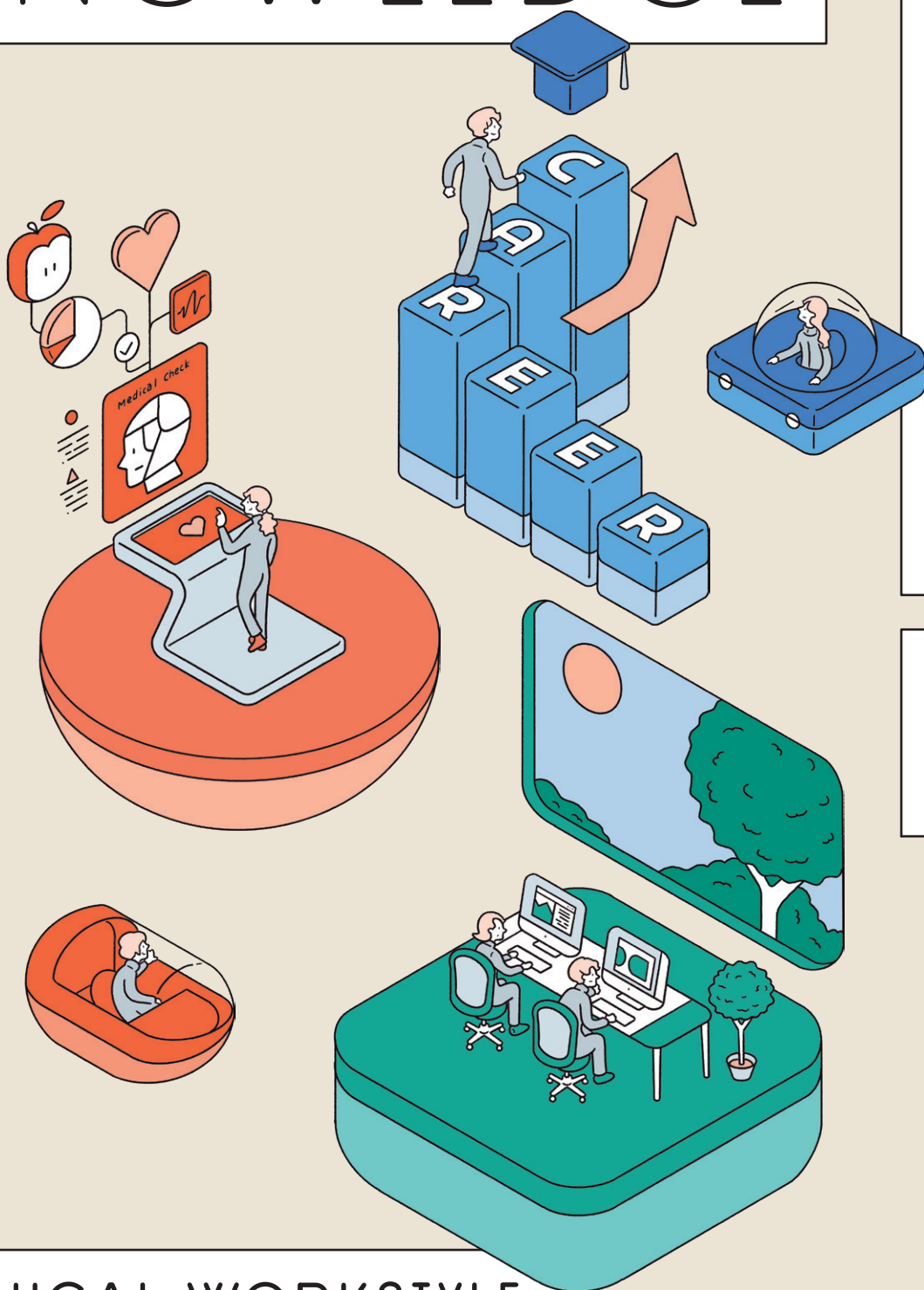


KNOWLEDGE

WORK DESIGN REVIEW

2022

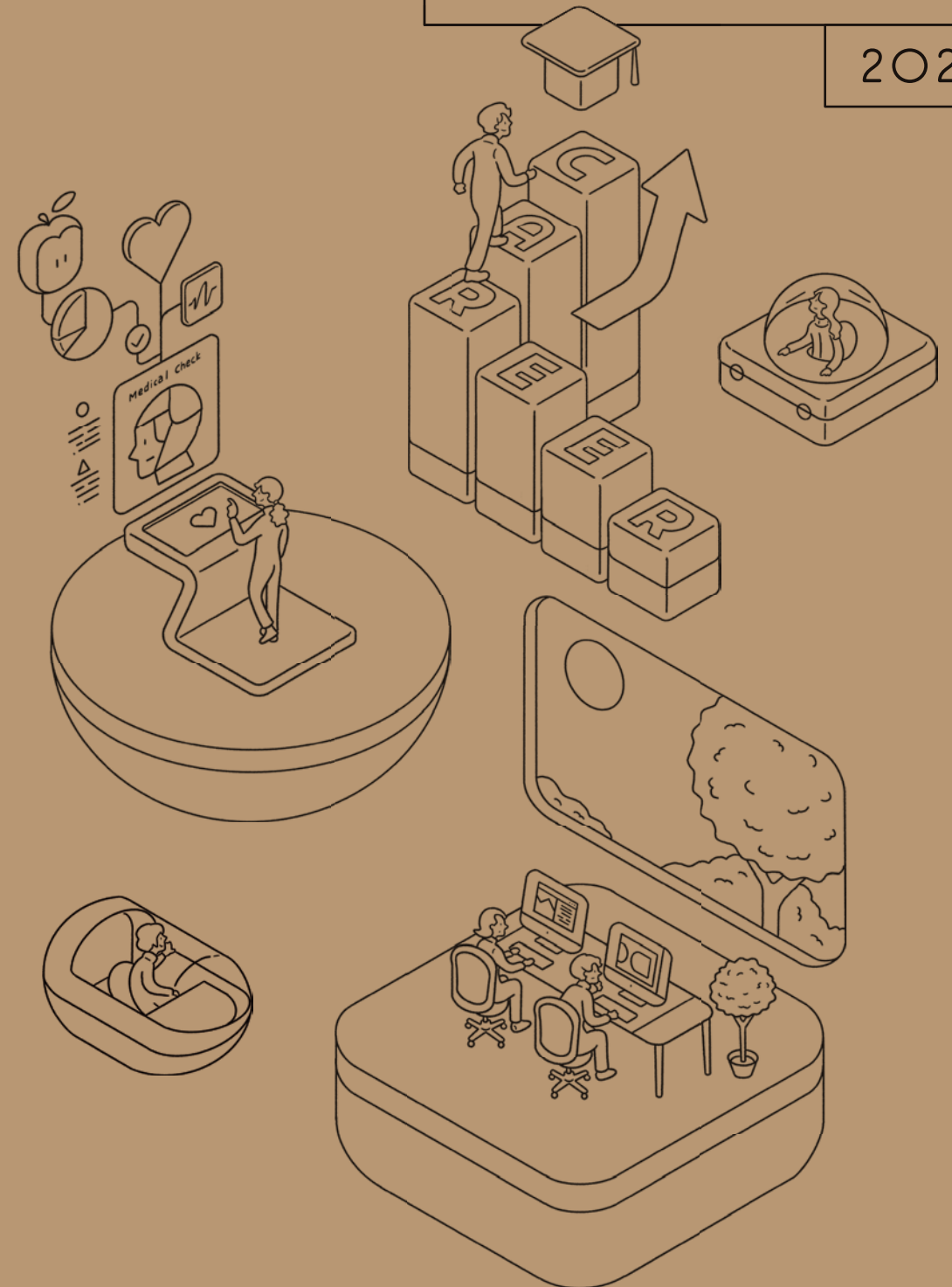


ETHICAL WORKSTYLE

KNOWLEDGE

WORK DESIGN REVIEW

2022



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As the boundaries between time, space, work, and other activities become increasingly fluid, our values and perception toward work are also undergoing major changes.

The first is the way we think about the relationship between work styles and health.
We are now living in what is described as the “100-year life era” in Japan and there is a growing need to continue working healthily for a long time.
What can we do to avoid feeling mentally and physically stressed?

Increasing emphasis is also being placed on the perspective of diversity.
What must we pay attention to in order to ensure that people of diverse characters and backgrounds feel a sense of fairness and are able to work happily?
It may be necessary to maintain the value of “altruism” as we work.
There is a need to share information on the status and situation of individuals, and to have mechanisms and methods for working with mutual respect for others.

Another aspect is the environment.
As we work, how can we ensure that we pass on a rich Earth to future generations?
Can we improve the situation by changing the way we work, or coming up with ways to be eco-friendly in our work?

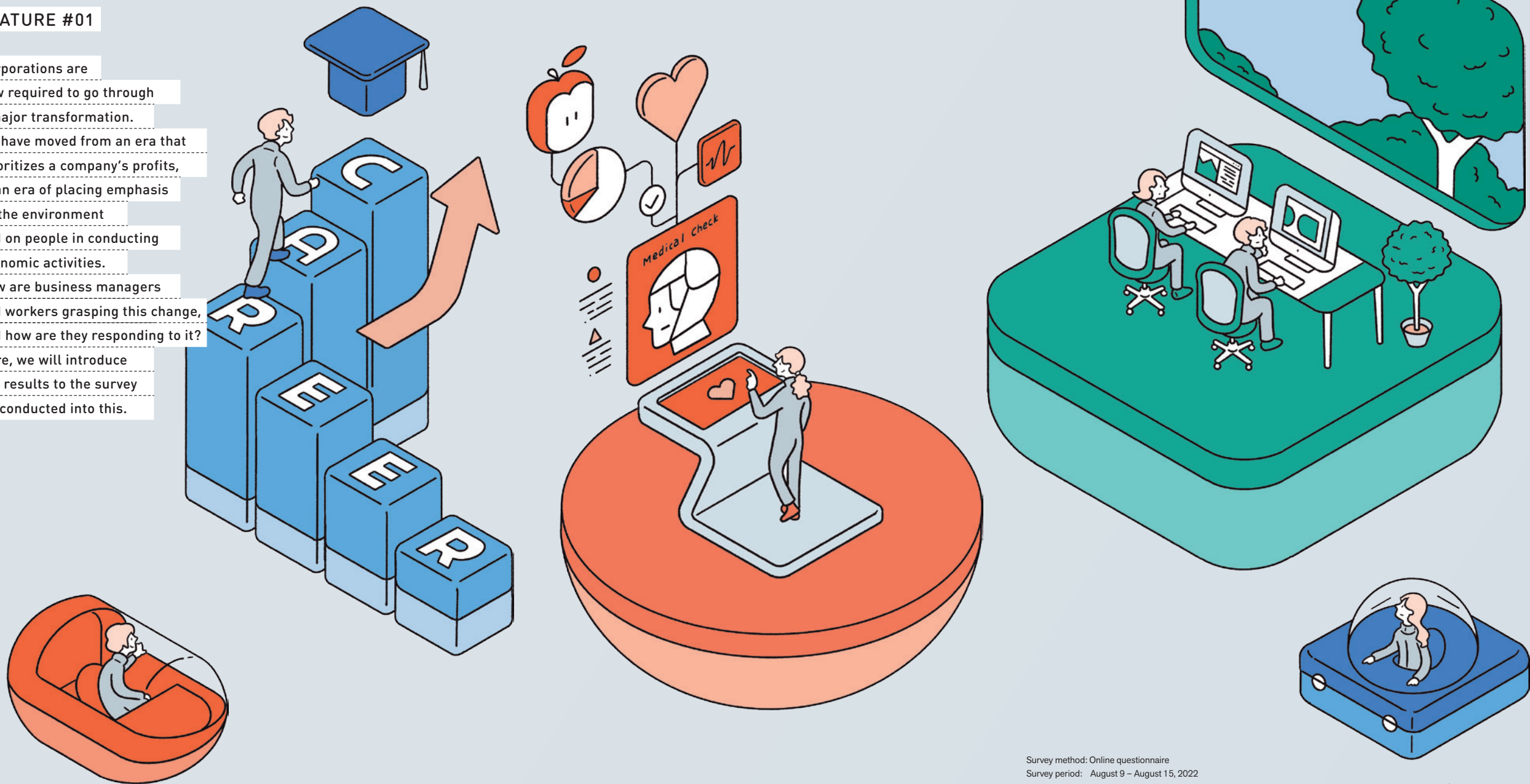
Work styles that give consideration to health, altruism and diversity, and the Earth’s environment are defined as “ethical work styles.”
In this edition of THE KNOWLEDGE we will consider.



ETHICAL WORK STYLE

FEATURE #01

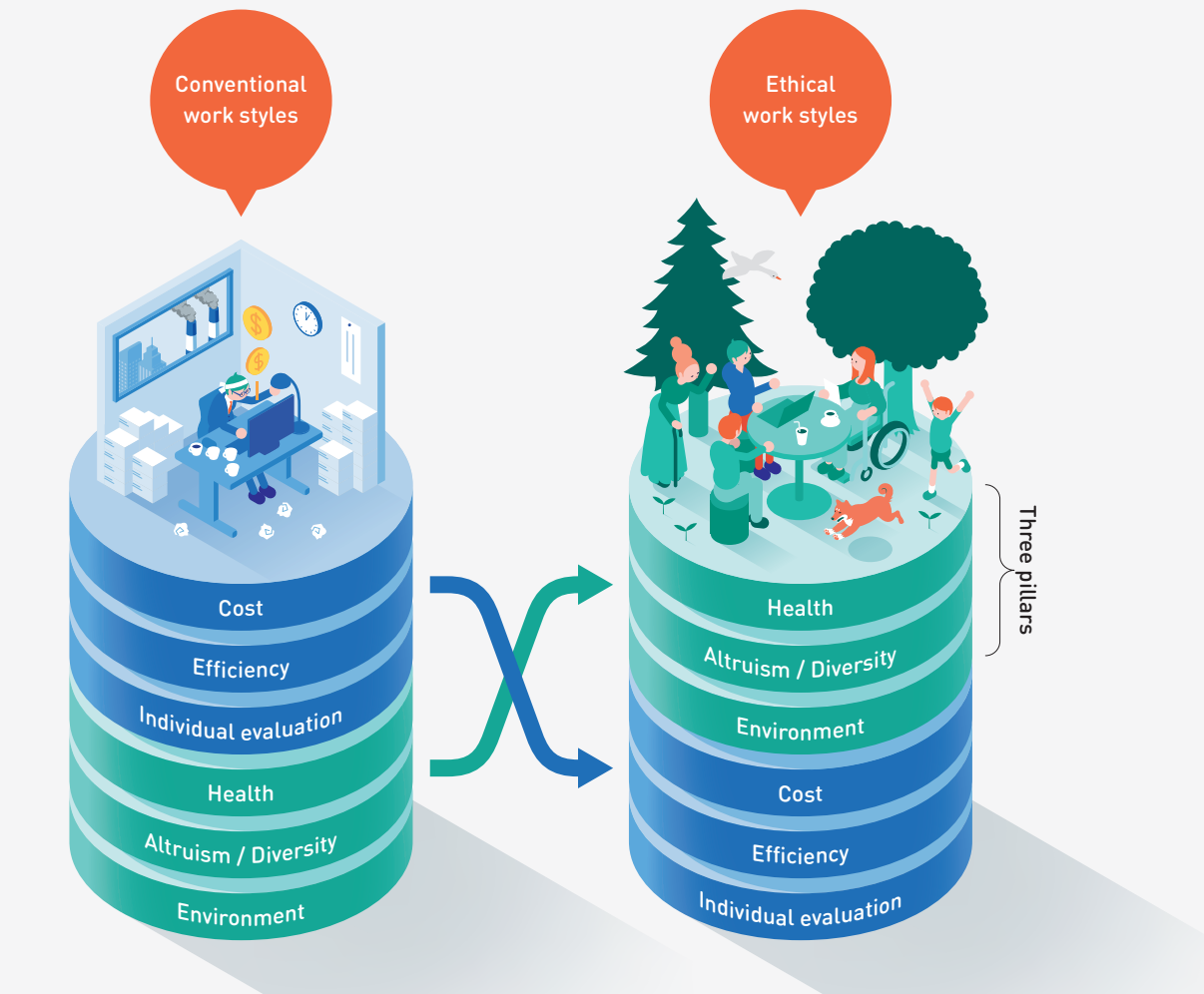
Corporations are now required to go through a major transformation. We have moved from an era that prioritizes a company's profits, to an era of placing emphasis on the environment and on people in conducting economic activities. How are business managers and workers grasping this change, and how are they responding to it? Here, we will introduce our results to the survey we conducted into this.



Survey method: Online questionnaire
Survey period: August 9 – August 15, 2022
Survey targets: 4,239 regular employees from companies with more than 100 employees and 524 managers/executive officers from companies with more than 100 employees, and which have business sites in the Tokyo metropolitan area (Tokyo, Kanagawa Prefecture, Chiba Prefecture, Saitama Prefecture), Chukyo metropolitan area (Aichi Prefecture, Gifu Prefecture, Mie Prefecture), Kansai metropolitan area (Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo Prefecture), and Fukuoka Prefecture

What is an ethical work style?

Figure 1. The concept and three pillars of ethical work styles

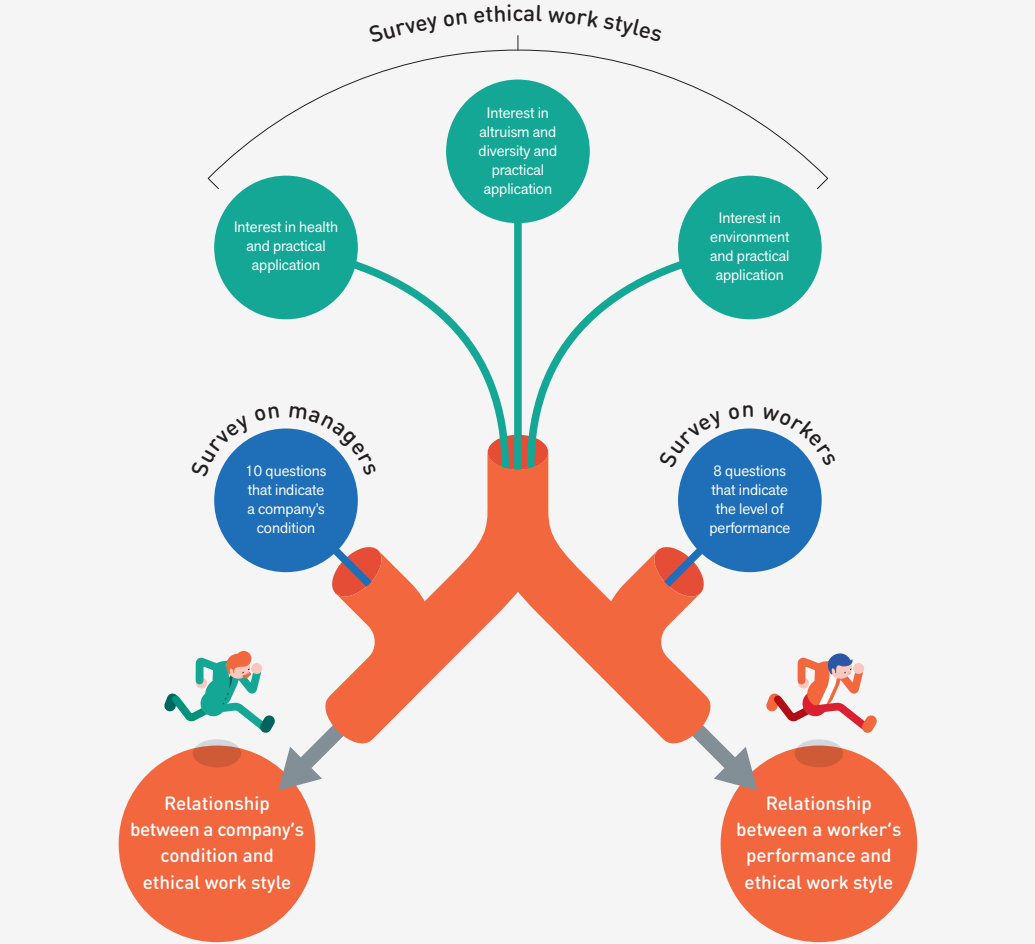


Until now, corporate activities have prioritized greater efficiency and economy. For this reason, we have sometimes seen the rights and dignity of others being sacrificed. However, with the growing focus on various problems including climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and an unequal society, companies and organizations that will do whatever it takes to achieve economic growth are gradually being weeded out. In light of these social circumstances, Okamura Corporation, which has

been conducting research on flexible work styles since 2012, considers it necessary to shift toward "ethical" work styles going forward. Society is likely to place greater emphasis on assessing if a work style is ethical based on the three pillars of health, altruism and diversity, and the environment, rather than making an assessment based on efficiency and economic factors (Figure 1).

Survey on managers / workers and ethical work styles

Figure 2. Framework of survey on ethical work styles



To test the hypothesis that a company in good condition, as well as high-performing workers, are interested in ethical initiatives and putting them into practice, managers and workers were asked about their interest in the three pillars of ethical work style and whether they were putting these into practice in a survey, which aimed to shed light on the relationship between ethical work style and companies in good condition and workers who are performing well. The survey first asked

managers and office workers about their interest in the three pillars and whether they were putting them into practice, and the results were scored. Next, the condition of the company and workers' performance were scored against a standard based on 10 items indicating a company's condition, and eight items indicating a worker's performance. The relationship between the two values was then analyzed (Figure 2).

Interest and status of efforts by managers

Figure 3. Managers’ interest in ethical work styles, and efforts towards these at their companies
n=524

Health		Altruism / Diversity		Environment	
		Interest			
92.7%		86.5%		83.7%	
Efforts implemented at their companies					
Introduction of flexible work hour systems	51.5%	Consideration for employees involved in childcare or family care	57.3%	Reduction of energy consumption in the office (Lighting)	51.2%
Introduction of systems that enable employees to choose where they work	44.7%	Acceptance of diverse personalities	37.8%	Reduction of energy consumption in the office (Air-conditioning)	48.1%
Establishment of spaces to have a break/rest in the office	42.0%	Implementation of social contribution activities	36.8%	Reduction of waste in the office	42.8%

Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

Firstly, managers were asked about the degree of interest in the three pillars of ethical work style. More than 90% of the respondents indicated that they have an interest in “health,” while 86% indicated an interest in “altruism and diversity” and more than 83% indicated an interest in “the environment.” Hence, it was clear that they had a strong interest in all three items.

Next, in addition to the degree of interest, they were asked if they were putting the relevant initiatives into practice in their companies. For

the “health” pillar, 52% selected “Introduction of flexible work hour systems” for the “altruism and diversity” pillar, 57% selected “Consideration for employees involved in childcare or family care” for the “environment” pillar, 51% selected “Reduction of energy consumption in the office (Lighting).” This showed a gap between the degree of interest and actual practice. Under the current situation, managers were interested but had not reached the point of applying said interest practically.

Interest and status of efforts by workers

Figure 4. Workers’ interest in ethical work style, and their own efforts to put it into practice
n=4,239

Health		Altruism / Diversity		Environment	
		Interest			
92.1%		79.1%		69.9%	
		Own efforts to put it into practice			
Efforts to maintain physical health at work	69.5%	Efforts to work with consideration for other colleagues	71.5%	Efforts to work with consideration for resource conservation, such as paperless initiatives	68.1%
Efforts to maintain mental health at work	68.7%	Efforts to accept the diverse personalities of colleagues	66.1%	Efforts to work with consideration for energy conservation	60.0%
Efforts to continue working healthily as long as one desires	65.0%	Efforts to work with the awareness of building a prolific career	51.6%	Efforts to work with the awareness of sustaining the environment	48.0%

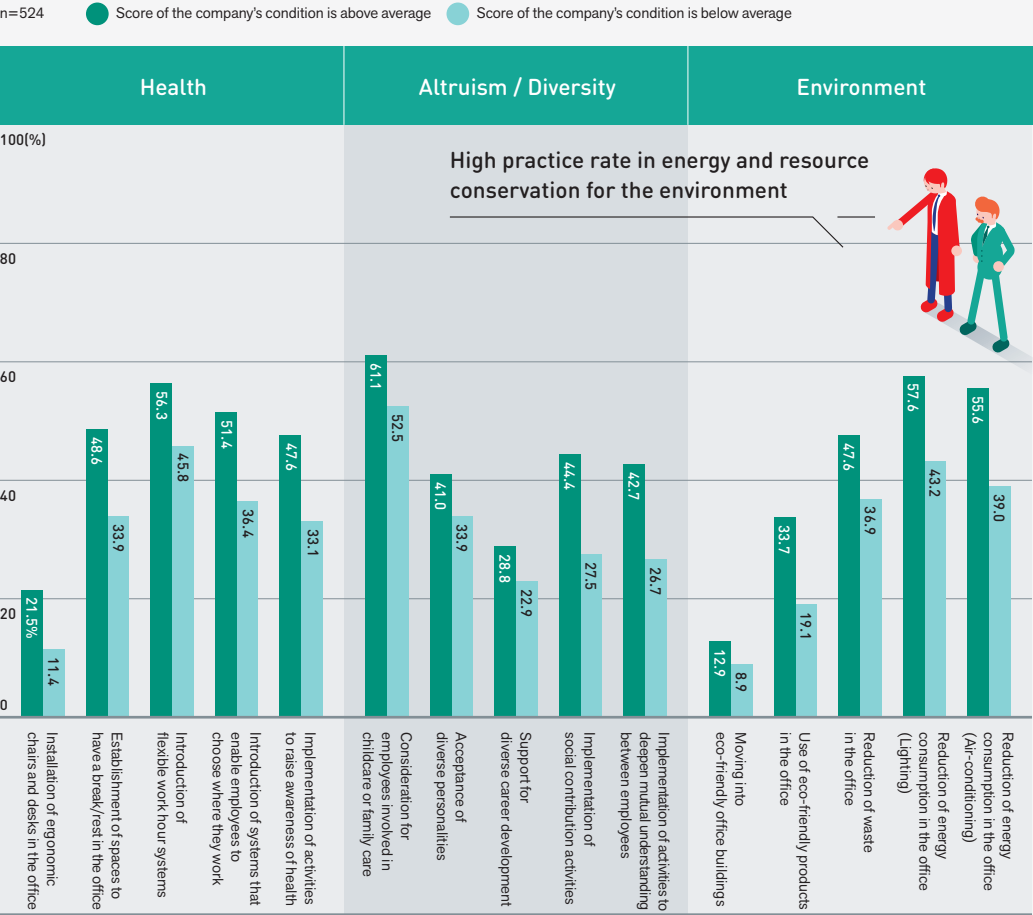
Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

The workers were similarly asked about their degree of interest in the three pillars of ethical work style. In response, 92% indicated that they were interested in “health,” 79% were interested in “altruism and diversity,” and about 70% were interested in the environment. Compared to the responses by managers, the degree of interest was 7% lower for “altruism and diversity” and 14% lower for “environment.” Then, they were asked about the efforts that they were putting into the

realization of each aspect. For the “health” pillar, about 70% selected “Efforts to maintain physical health at work” for the “altruism and diversity” pillar, 72% selected “Efforts to work with consideration for other colleagues” for the “environment” pillar, 68% selected “Efforts to work with consideration for resource conservation, such as paperless initiatives.” Despite strong interest in “health,” there was a gap with the percentage of respondents putting effort into this aspect.

Differences in a company’s condition and practice

Figure 5. Status of efforts by the company (classified by the company’s condition)



Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

Next, the companies were divided into two groups as shown in Figure 2—companies with above-average condition, and those with below-average condition. The status of their ethical work style practices was then compared (Figure 5).

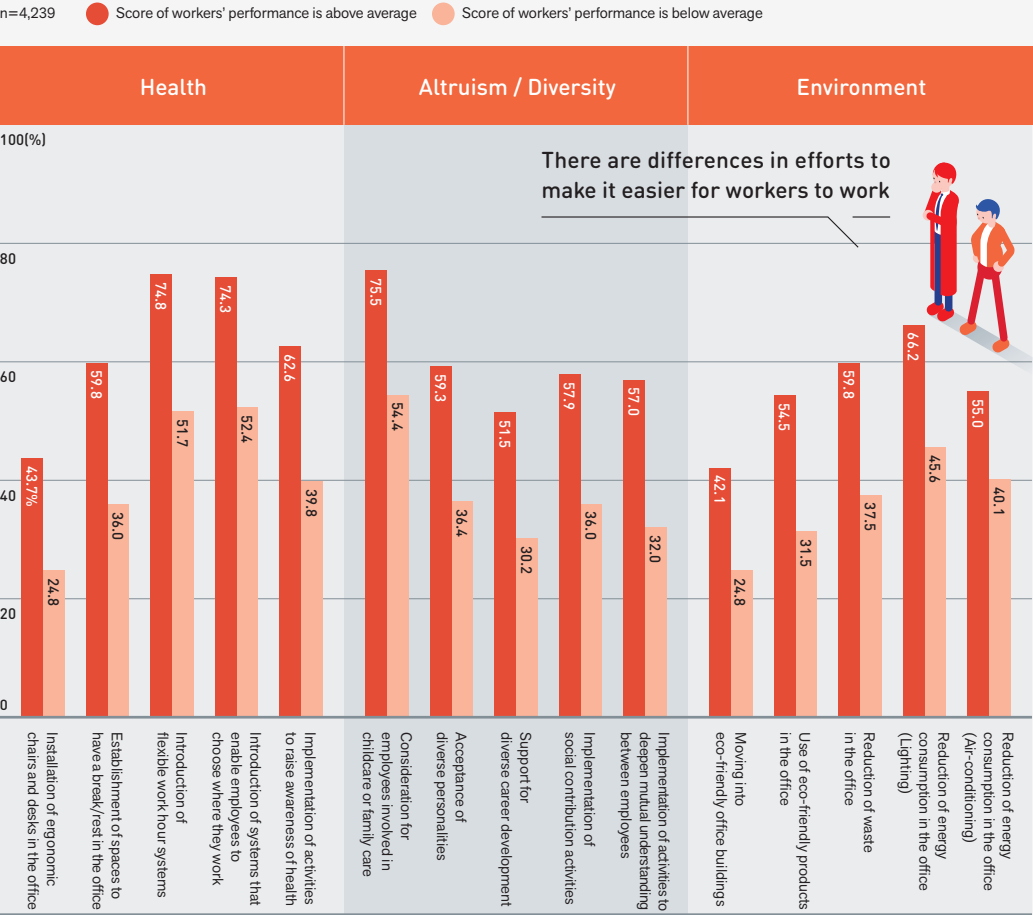
With regard to health, items other than “Installation of ergonomic chairs and desks in the office” tended to have a high rate of implementation. However, there was a clear difference between the two groups.

With regard to altruism and diversity, many companies in both groups practice “Consideration for employees involved in childcare or family care,” while a low percentage of companies in both groups practice “Support for diverse career development.”

With regard to the environment, implementation rate was high for practices such as energy and resource conservation.

Differences in workers’ performance and efforts

Figure 6. Status of companies’ efforts at the workplace (classified by workers’ performance)



Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

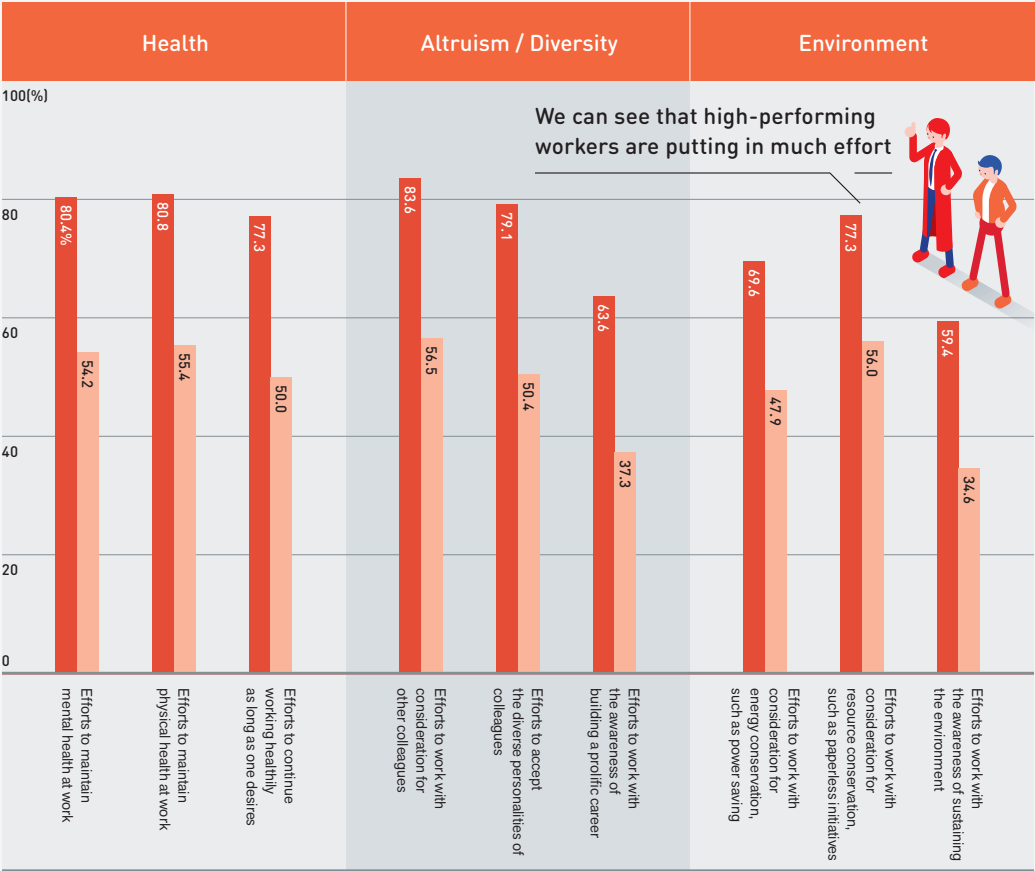
Similarly, workers were also divided into two groups based on the scores related to items indicating their performance—those with scores above the average, and those with scores below the average. They were then asked about their ongoing efforts related to ethical work style practices at their companies (Figure 6). The companies that the high-performing group were affiliated with had a higher implementation rate across all items, but implementation rate was particularly high for the two

items related to flexible work hours and selection of workplaces, and for the item “Consideration for employees involved in childcare or family care.”

Items with a significantly different rate of implementation between the two groups were “Establishment of spaces to have a break/rest in the office” and “Implementation of activities to deepen mutual understanding between employees,” showing a difference in efforts to make it easier for workers to work.

Differences in workers’ performance and efforts

Figure 7. Workers’ own efforts (classified by workers’ performance)
n=4,239 ● Score of workers’ performance is above average ● Score of workers’ performance is below average



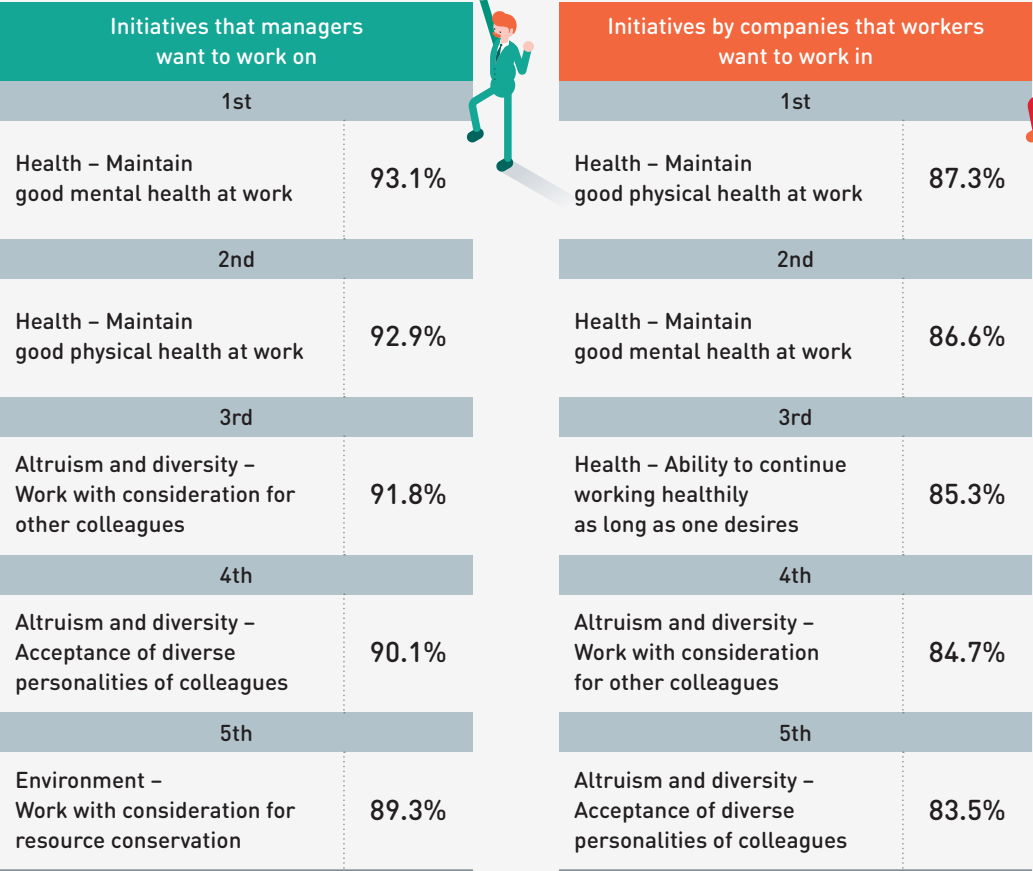
Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

With the workers similarly grouped by their performance scores—above average and below average—we looked at whether there were any differences in their individual efforts. The results showed that the high-performing group was putting in more effort across all items (Figure 7). Furthermore, if we were to look only at the high-performing group, we can see that implementation rate was around 80% for six out of nine items. On the other hand, fewer workers were implementing

items related to maintaining the environment and building a prolific career, in comparison with other items; this was true for both the high-performing and low-performing groups. With regard to high-performing workers, we saw that there was a tendency to practice ethical work styles in the companies they were working in, as well as to put effort into ethical-related initiatives on their own.

Initiatives that will become important in the future

Figure 8. Initiatives that managers want to work on
Figure 9. Initiatives by companies that workers want to work in



Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

Finally, managers were asked about the initiatives that their companies want to work on in the future, while workers were asked about what initiatives they wish to see in the companies they want to work in. The managers scored high for many items, but initiatives related to physical and mental health ranked high. Items related to “altruism and diversity,” such as consideration for other colleagues and respect for individuals’ personalities, also ranked high (Figure 8).

Similarly, for the workers’ responses, items related to health also ranked high (Figure 9). Both managers and workers appeared to perceive the three pillars in decreasing importance from “health,” to “altruism and diversity,” and finally, “the environment.” It is possible that the low rank of initiatives related to the environment is due to the perception that matters related to the environment cannot easily be changed by a single company or individual.

C O N C L U S I O N

Do interest and initiatives in health, altruism and diversity, and the environment have an impact on the condition of companies and individuals?



This chapter has introduced the new “ethical work style” that Okamura is advocating, along with the results of a questionnaire survey. We are moving from an era of prioritizing a company’s interest in the conduct of corporate activities, to an era of valuing employees and growing together with the company’s stakeholders. Moreover, there is a need to consider passing on the environment to future generations.

Okamura has defined an ethical work style based on the three pillars of health, altruism and diversity, and environment, and the survey has shown that many people are interested in these elements. However, there was a gap between the percentage of interested respondents and the percentage of respondents putting the initiatives into practice. With regard to the initiatives being implemented, the results showed that managers were conscious of wanting to work on many of these items in the future. This suggests that they are finally approaching the phase of putting initiatives into practice.

Despite understanding the contents and initiatives related to ethical work style, and efforts to put it into practice, some do not know what merits it brings to companies and workers. To address these doubts, this chapter has shown clearly that companies and workers engaged in more efforts related to ethical work style, are in a better condition and perform better.

The next chapter and after features individual studies on the three pillars of ethical work style: health, altruism and diversity, and the environment.

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Toward a society that embraces diverse careers

FEATURE #02



When thinking about “altruism and diversity,” which is one of the pillars of ethical work style, Okamura considers it important to also enhance the flexibility of careers.

To that end, we conducted a survey on multitrack work styles.

FEATURE #02

To realize multitrack work styles

Figure 1. Four elements of flexible work styles



Figure 2. Examples of multitrack work styles



Okamura has been working on validating the effects of flexible work styles since 2012, and analyzing the changes that occur when the flexibility of three elements—time, location, and tasks—is enhanced. As of 2022, methods for becoming an organization comprising members, who are considerate to one another and have diverse values, have been generating much attention, from the perspective of altruism and diversity.

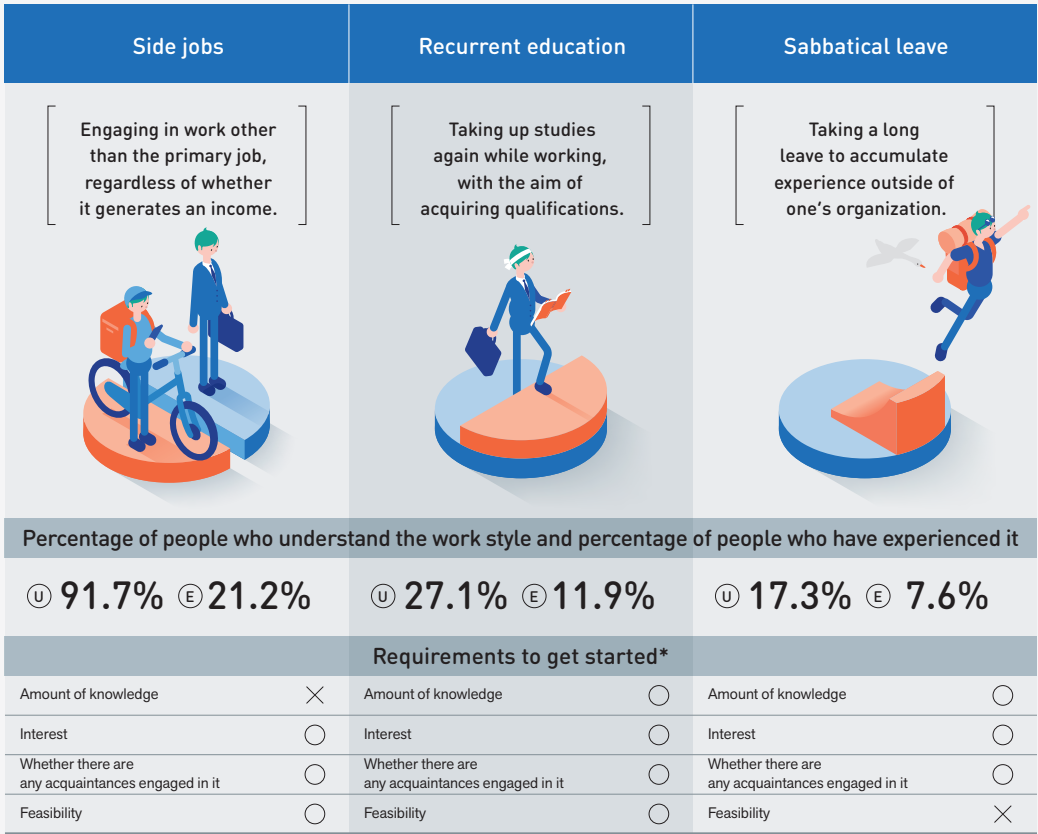
In addition to the aforementioned three

elements, Okamura considers it important to also enhance the flexibility of workers' careers (Figure 1). To that end, we have launched initiatives to realize a society where it is possible to adopt a multitrack work style while remaining affiliated to one's current organization, as shown in Figure 2, without undergoing the major change of switching jobs. Such a work style makes it possible to accumulate experience in a way that one would not have been able to previously.

Career flexibility and work styles

Figure 3. Characteristics of side jobs, recurrent education, and sabbatical leave

n=3,192
* Based on the results of logistic regression analysis, items which had statistically significant correlation with starting each work styles are indicated with "○"



Source: Joint research between Tokyo Woman's Christian University and Okamura, 2022

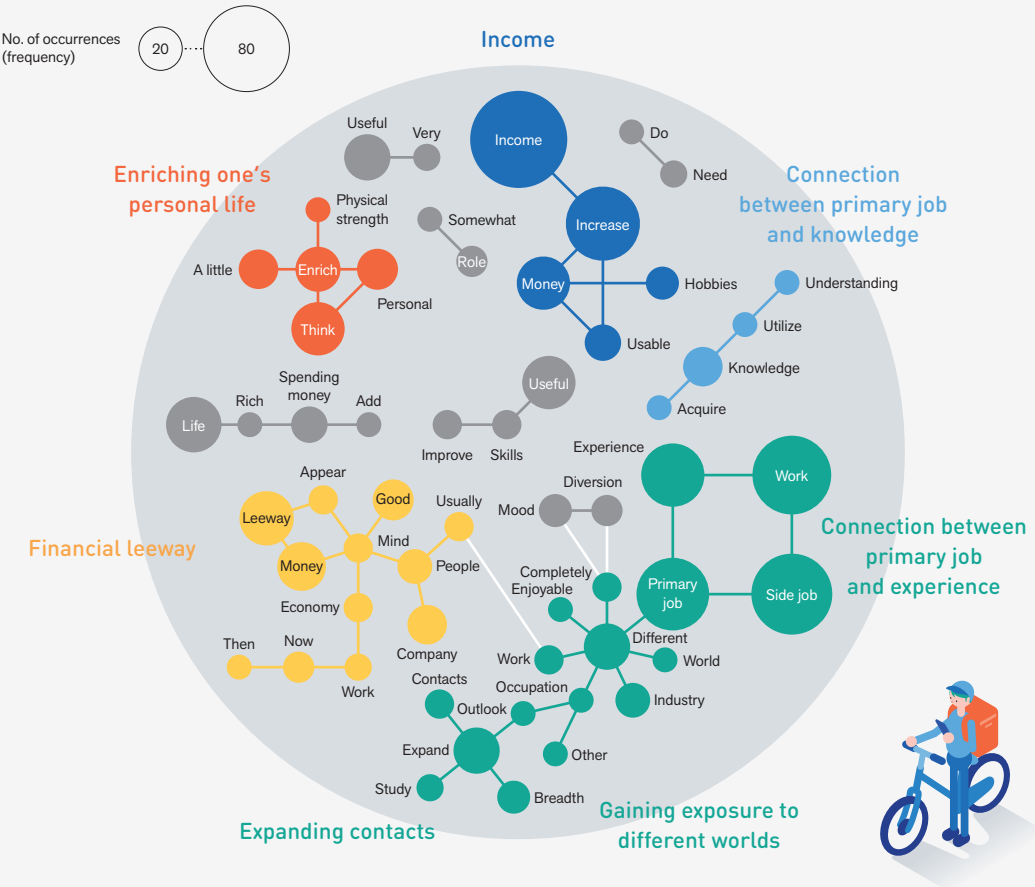
The three work styles that Okamura considers to be effective in enhancing career flexibility are side jobs, recurrent education, and sabbatical leave. Okamura, jointly with Tokyo Woman's Christian University, conducted a survey on the abovementioned work styles. Firstly, a low percentage of respondents understood recurrent education and sabbatical leave, and the percentage of respondents who practice those work styles is also low. Moreover, even the percentage of respondents who have side

jobs, also remained low at around 20% (Figure 3). Next, respondents were asked about the conditions that would need to be met in order for them to shift to concrete action. Although the amount of knowledge was related to recurrent education and sabbatical leave, no correlation was observed with side jobs. With regard to the feasibility of each work style, correlation was observed for side jobs and recurrent education, but was observed to have no impact on sabbatical leave.

Effects gained through a side job

Figure 4. Advantages felt by those who have experienced a side job

* The result is based on the text mining conducted with answers in Japanese.



Source: Joint research between Tokyo Woman's Christian University and Okamura, 2022

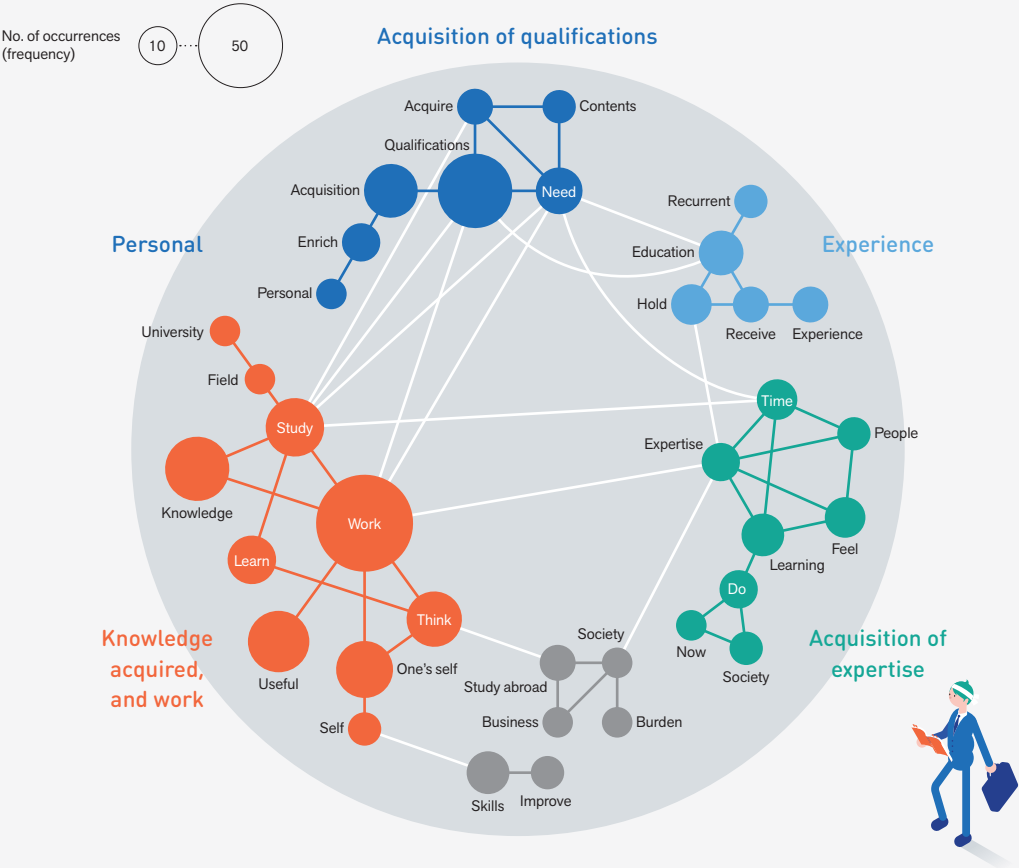
Next, respondents who had experience with each of the work styles were asked about their advantages. The words with many occurrences were analyzed and the relationship between the words was defined. Firstly, with regard to the advantages of side jobs, a large cluster related to income and financial leeway emerged, showing that a significant percentage of the respondents felt that side jobs offer financial advantages (Figure 4).

Large clusters were observed in relation to the connection between the primary job and experience, exposure to different worlds, and expanding contacts. Hypothetically, even if a person had taken up a side job for financial reasons to begin with, they would likely have experienced other advantages such as enriched personal lives and expansion of contacts. Consequently, they would then have felt that a side job was useful to the development of a prolific career.

Effects of recurrent education

Figure 5. Advantages felt by those who have experienced recurrent education

* The result is based on the text mining conducted with answers in Japanese.



Source: Joint research between Tokyo Woman's Christian University and Okamura, 2022

Similarly, those who have experienced recurrent education were asked about its advantages (Figure 5). The largest cluster was related to knowledge acquired and work. A large cluster related to the acquisition of expertise was also observed, showing that many people felt that there are advantages to acquiring work-related knowledge and delving deep into areas of expertise. It appears there were also respondents who took up learning again to gain specific qualifications in addition to knowledge and

experience.

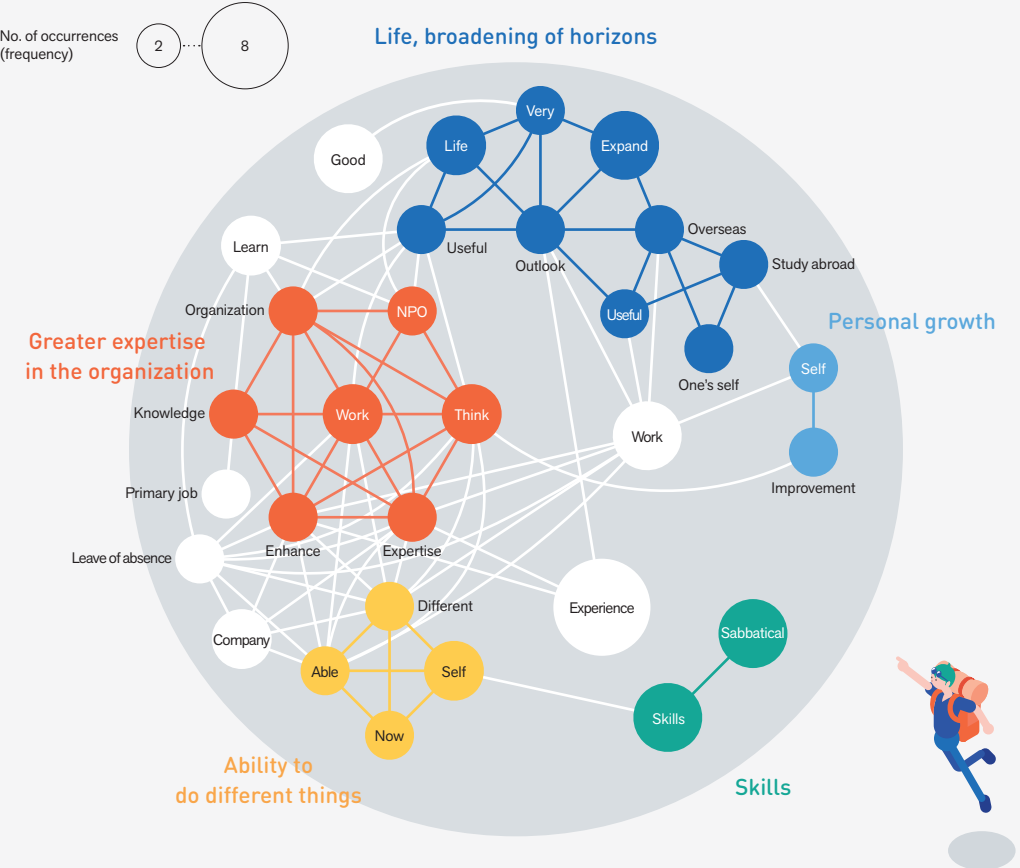
A characteristic of those who have experienced recurrent education is that, in comparison with those who have experienced the other two work styles, many of these respondents experienced mainly work-related advantages.

This is also advantageous to the organization, and suggests that it would be meaningful for companies to promote re-learning and support those who wish to take up recurrent education.

Effects of sabbatical leave

Figure 6. Advantages felt by those who have experienced sabbatical leave

* The result is based on the text mining conducted with answers in Japanese.



Source: Joint research between Tokyo Woman's Christian University and Okamura, 2022

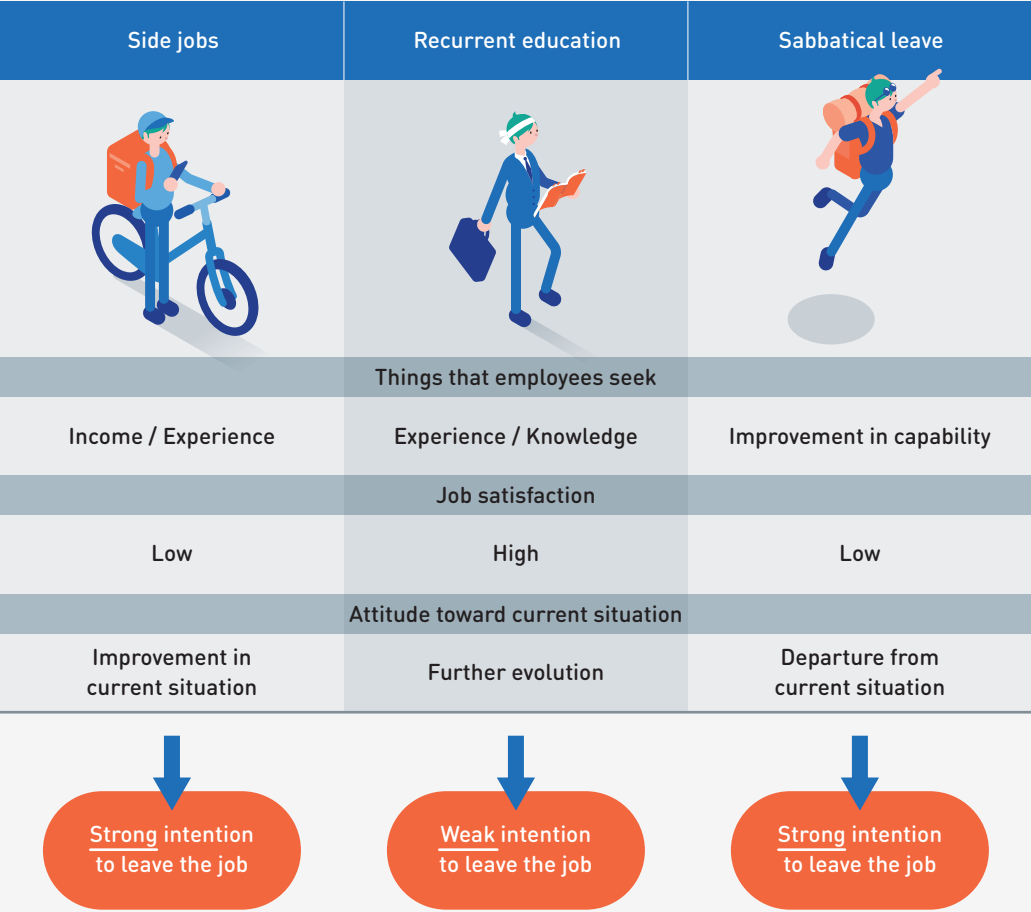
Last but not least, those who have experienced taking sabbatical leave were asked about its advantages (Figure 6). The largest cluster that emerged was items related to life and the broadening of horizons. One of the advantages of sabbatical leave is gaining an objective perspective by stepping away from one's organization. The next largest cluster observed was items related to greater expertise in the organization. In many cases, respondents seemed to feel that working in

an external organization helped them to acquire specialized knowledge.

There was also a cluster related to the ability to do different things. It was likely that respondents considered a sabbatical leave as an opportunity to take up challenges in a completely different field from their primary job. However, items related to direct feedback into the job generally did not emerge, as they did for side jobs and recurrent education.

Three work styles and intention to leave one’s job

Figure 7. Mindset of those who wish to adopt these work styles



Source: Joint research between Tokyo Woman's Christian University and Okamura, 2022

Finally, we shall touch on the risk of people quitting due to multitrack work styles.

Firstly, we can see that there is stronger intention to leave one’s job among those who wish to take on a side job or take sabbatical leave. However, the survey showed that the reasons may vary greatly; those who wish to take on a side job are dissatisfied with their current job, while those who wish to take sabbatical leave wish to address social issues at an NPO, for example, in addition to dissatisfaction with

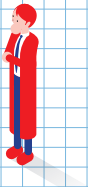
the current job.

Those who wish to engage in recurrent education appear to have a positive image of their current jobs and organizations as they are highly satisfied with their jobs and have weak intention to leave the job.

While we have analyzed the three work styles, it was clear that they each have different characteristics. Hence, it is necessary to take these characteristics into consideration when introducing the respective work styles.

C O N C L U S I O N

Toward
an era of greater
awareness of diversity,
in which organizations
and individuals tackle
challenges to
achieve growth



In recent years, we are increasingly aware of the important role that diversity plays toward the continued survival of an organization.

For this reason, it is important to include people with diverse values, viewpoints, and expertise in a team. Going forward, it will be necessary to support individuals in the development of prolific careers and challenges to try out new work styles, and to foster and nurture such individuals. In the survey conducted jointly by Okamura and Tokyo Woman’s Christian University, it was observed that respondents did not know much about recurrent education and sabbatical leave despite widespread understanding about side jobs. Although this survey had shed light on some of the advantages and disadvantages of each work style, there is a need to gain more in-depth and practical knowledge through other means, such as by establishing role-models within companies.

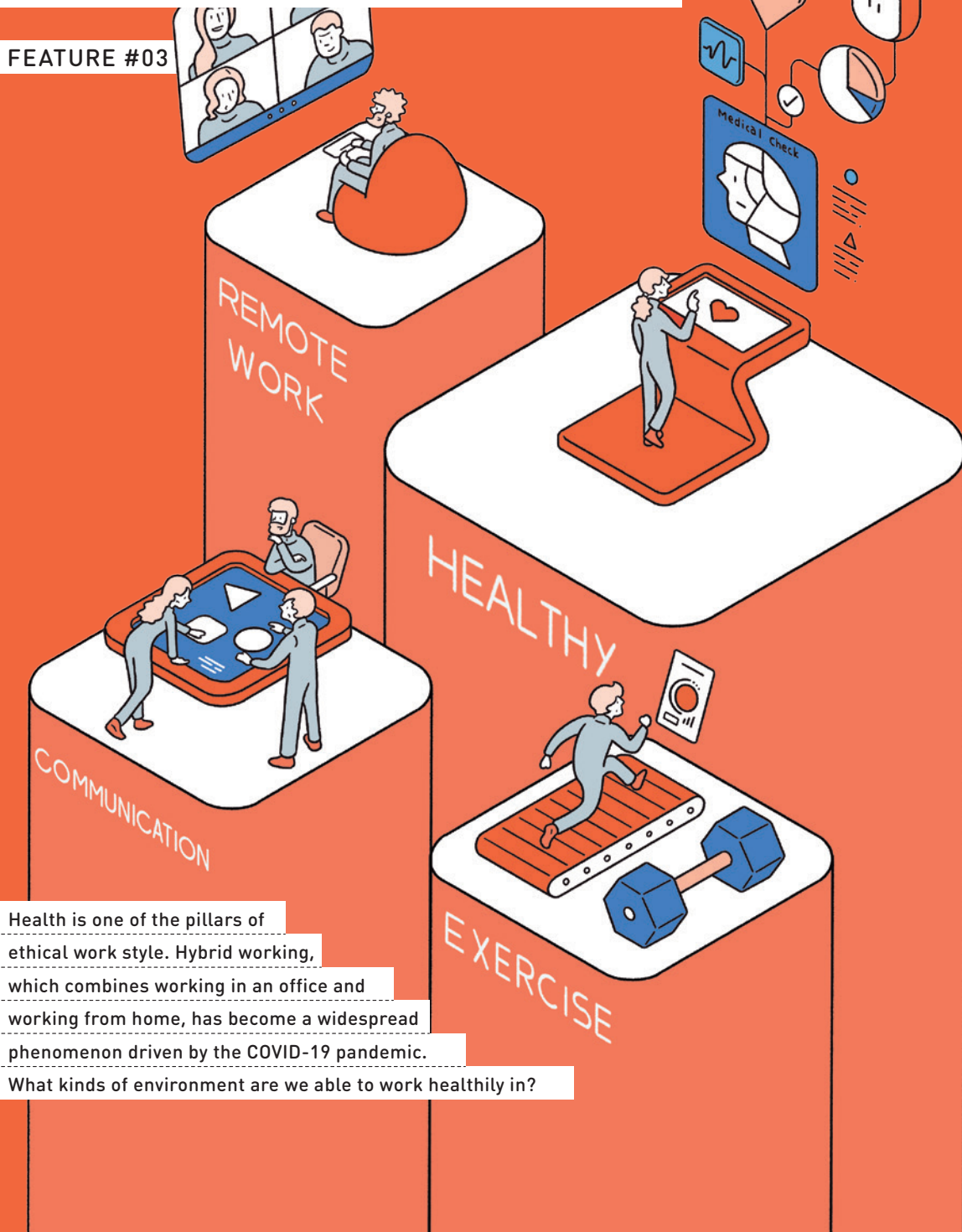
When introducing new work styles, it is important to change the surrounding systems at the same time. For example, when introducing side

jobs as a new work style, problems that never used to occur in the job could emerge, such as industrial accidents, health management, and leakage of information. There is a need for the company and the workers who wish to take on side jobs to come to firm arrangements beforehand on these issues.

From the viewpoints of managers and those in charge of human resources management, there are likely to be concerns about the outflow of human resources if workers are permitted to take on side jobs and take sabbatical leave, which are associated with a strong intention to leave the job. However, by changing their perspectives, we can also say that employing people who wish to take on side jobs or take sabbatical leave to work in other organizations, could prove to be an opportunity. In particular, for companies that are exploring new business and creating innovation, this could present an opportunity to welcome members who can bring experience and knowledge that they are unable to foster internally.

Maintaining good health at work

FEATURE #03



Health is one of the pillars of ethical work style. Hybrid working, which combines working in an office and working from home, has become a widespread phenomenon driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. What kinds of environment are we able to work healthily in?

FEATURE #03

What do we need to maintain good health at work?

Figure 1. Seven actions for maintaining and promoting health



Produced and translated by Okamura based on Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, "2015 Health and Productivity Management Office Report."













Many people may have experienced changes in their mindset toward health after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Health and Productivity Management Office Report published by METI in 2015 sets out seven actions that are important for maintaining and improving employees' health, which should be promoted regularly in offices (Figure 1).

As working spaces are expanding beyond the office to people's homes these days, Okamura and

TATAMI inc. conducted a survey on 500 hybrid workers to shed light on what constitutes a good office and home environment for maintaining good health at work while incorporating hybrid work styles. This section looks at the results of this survey.

Survey on the health and working environments

Figure 2. Survey items related to the health and working environments of hybrid workers

Indicators of health condition	Items related to the working environment
 Work performance Evaluation of own work in the case where demonstrable work performance when one is not ill or injured is set as 100%	 Feel comfortable 21 items such as: Comfortable room temperature / Adequately bright working spaces
 Happiness Current sense of happiness	 Communicate 14 items such as: Has opportunities to consult freely / Cohabitants are understanding about working from home
 Work engagement**1 "Vigor," "dedication," and "absorption" toward work Are all three elements present?	 Take a break / Have a change of pace 12 items such as: Sometimes has a drink at breaks during work / Has a proper break as stipulated during lunch break
 Job stress Is there any fatigue, anxiety, etc.?	 Move the body 8 items such as: Does stretches and exercises / Does not sit down much during work
	 Maintain proper dietary habits 4 items such as: Takes snacks during work / Sometimes skips lunch
	 Maintain good cleanliness 4 items such as: Washes hands and gargles / Tidies up around oneself
	 Enhance health awareness 4 items such as: Checks one's own health condition / Reads up about health information during work
	 Other actions 3 items such as: Sometimes takes care of child / Sometimes provides nursing care for other family members

Source: Joint research between TATAMI inc. and Okamura, 2021

In this survey, respondents were asked about their health, based on indicators from past research that are used for evaluating the health in the workplace. In addition, taking as reference the seven actions for maintaining and improving health, advocated by METI, the working environment was defined based on elements such as the characteristics of the working locations and work styles when working in an office or working from home, and 70 items were set for the respondents

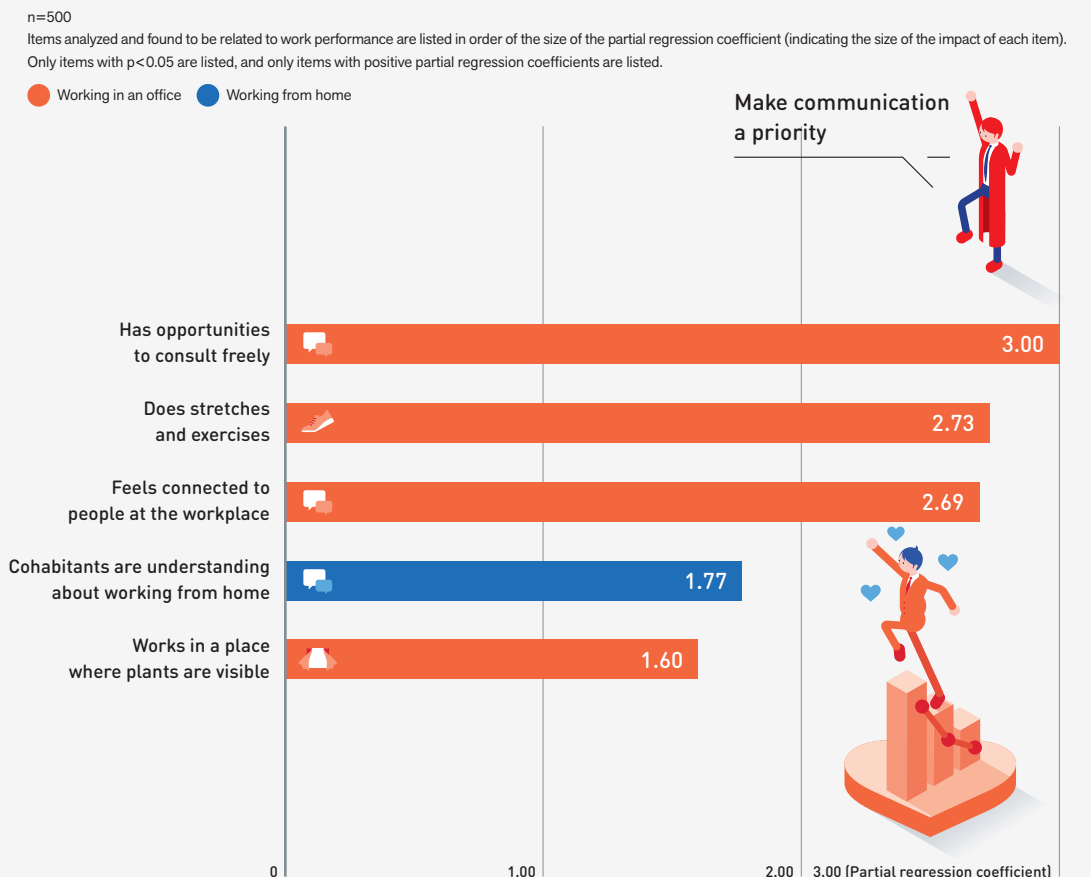
to answer. The relationship between the working environment and health of hybrid workers was analyzed*2 (Figure 2).

*1 Source: Akihito Shimazu, Shokuba no Pojitibu Mentaru Herusu (Toward Positive Mental Health at the Workplace), 2015.

*2 Multiple regression analysis was carried out with indicators that capture the health condition as the objective variables, and items related to the working environment as the explanatory variables.

How do we enhance work performance?

Figure 3. Environment when working in an office or working from home, in relation to enhancing the work performance of hybrid workers



Source: Joint research between TATAMI inc. and Okamura, 2021

Firstly, we shall look at the relationship between the work performance of hybrid workers and the office and home environments. The items shown in Figure 3 were observed to be related to improvements in work performance.

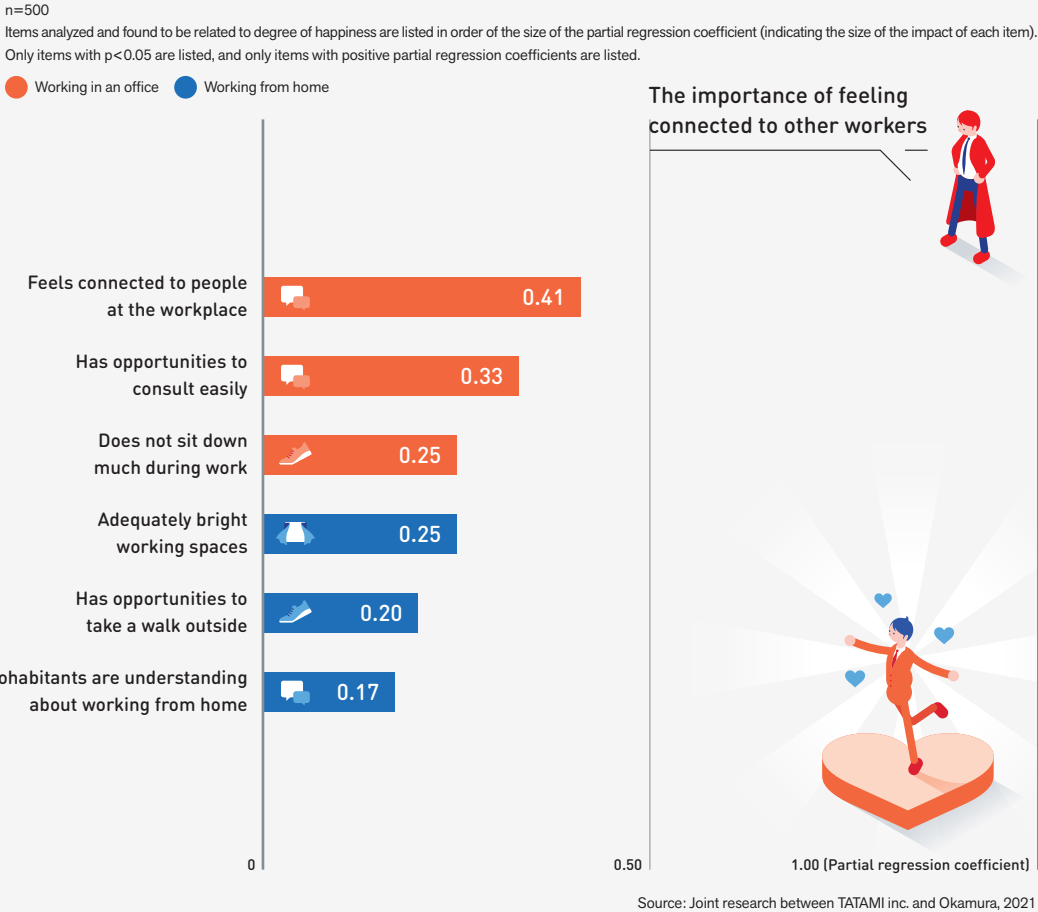
Looking at items that have a particularly large impact, we can see that work performance is related to "having opportunities to consult freely" and "feeling connected to people at the workplace" when working in the office. In addition, when

workers improve their physical condition by "doing stretches and exercises" in the office, they are more likely to be able to perform at a higher level.

When working from home, work performance is related to "cohabitants being understanding about working from home." It is likely that workers are able to perform at a higher level if they can focus on their work while working from home without having to worry about bothering their cohabitants.

How do we improve happiness?

Figure 4. Environment when working in an office or working from home, in relation to improving the degree of happiness of hybrid workers



Looking at the relationship between the second indicator, which is the degree of happiness of hybrid workers, and the office and home environments, we can see that the six items shown in Figure 4 are related to improving happiness (Figure 4).

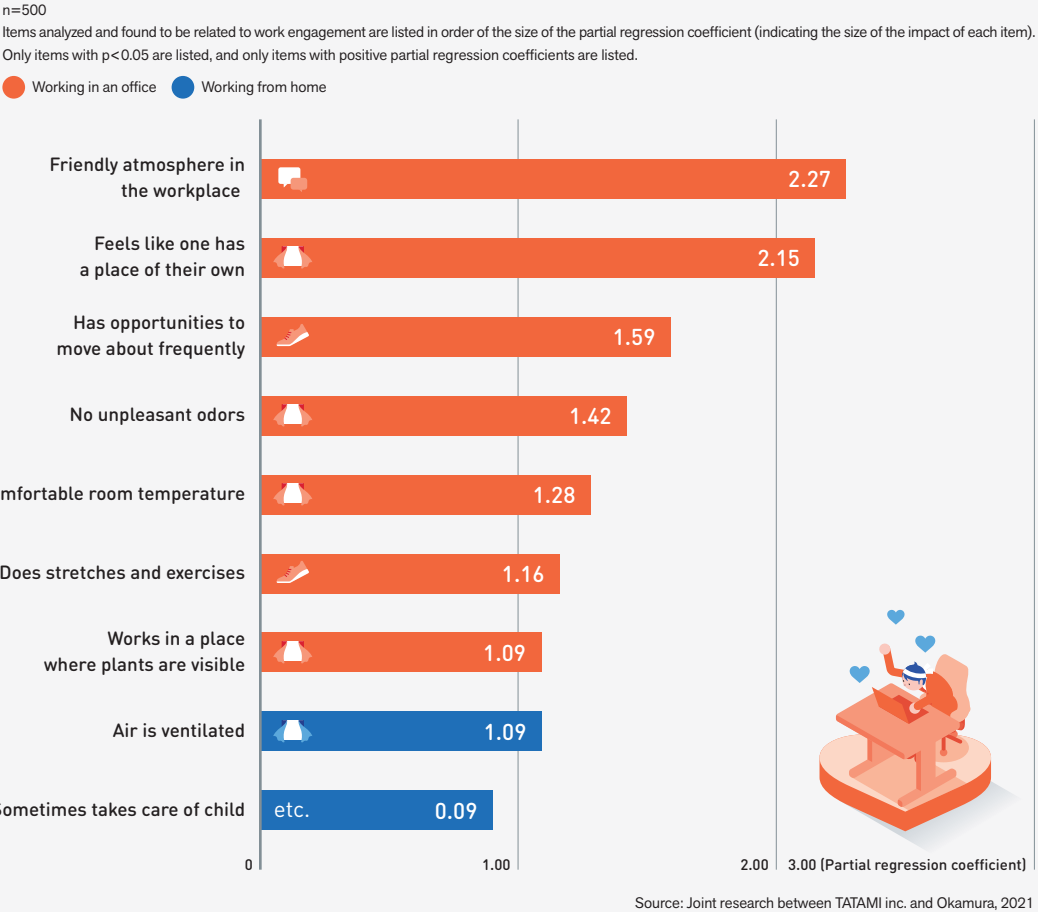
As for items that have a particularly large impact, we can see that the degree of happiness is related to “feeling connected to people at the workplace” and “having opportunities to consult freely” when working in the office. Those who have opportunities to consult

freely and who feel connected with other members in the office feel less isolated, and are therefore likely to experience a higher degree of happiness.

When working from home, the degree of happiness is related to having “adequately bright working spaces” and “having opportunities to take a walk outside.” This is likely because introducing natural light, breathing in outdoor air in between work, and moving the body can provide a change of pace and improve one’s degree of happiness.

How do we enhance work engagement?

Figure 5. Environment when working in an office or working from home, in relation to enhancing the work engagement of hybrid workers



Looking at the relationship between the third indicator, which is the work engagement of hybrid workers, and the office and home environments, we can see that the nine items shown in Figure 5 are related to enhancing work engagement.

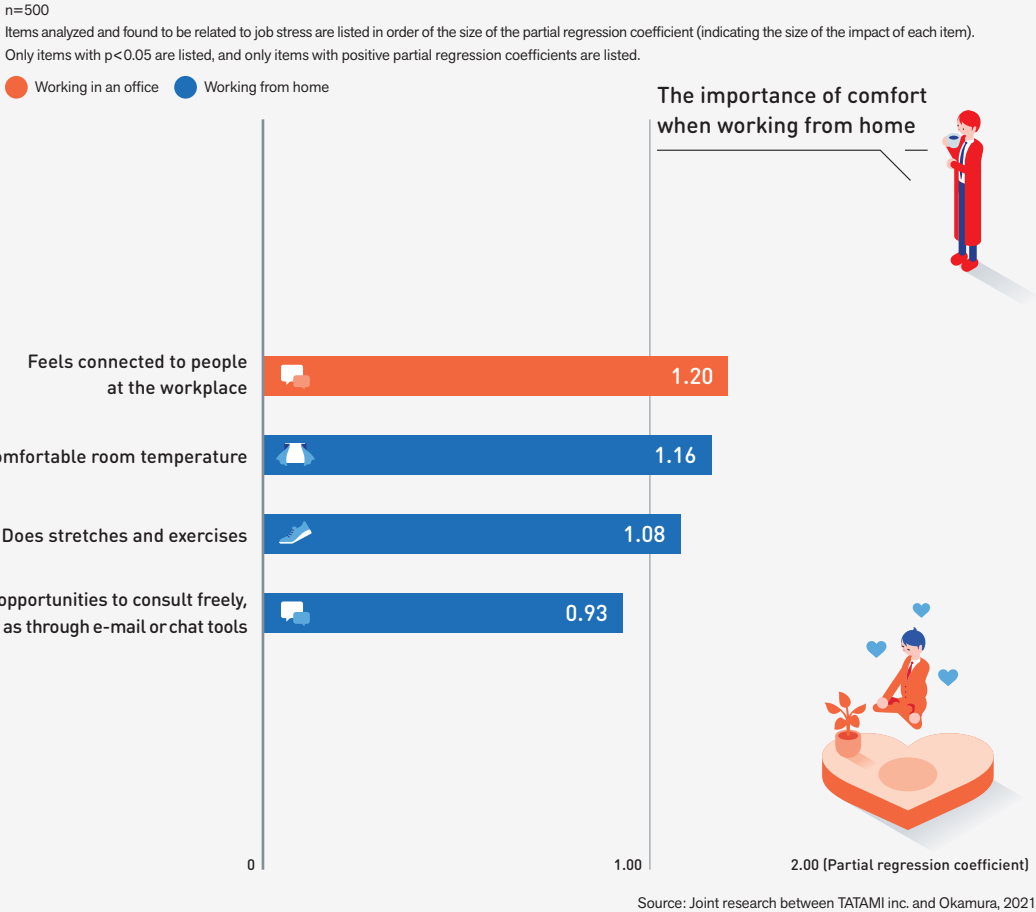
Looking at items that have a particularly large impact, work engagement is related to “friendly atmosphere in the workplace” and “feeling like one has a place of their own” when working in the office. It is likely that a comfortable workplace enhances

work engagement for workers going into the office.

Work engagement is related to the “air being ventilated” and “sometimes taking care of a child” when working from home. As these two items are difficult to achieve when working in the office, workers probably consider them as advantages that are unique to working from home.

How do we lower job stress?

Figure 6. Environment when working in an office or working from home, in relation to lowering the job stress of hybrid workers



We shall now look at the relationship between the fourth indicator, which is the job stress of hybrid workers, and the office and home environments. We can see that the four items shown in Figure 6 are related to lowering job stress.

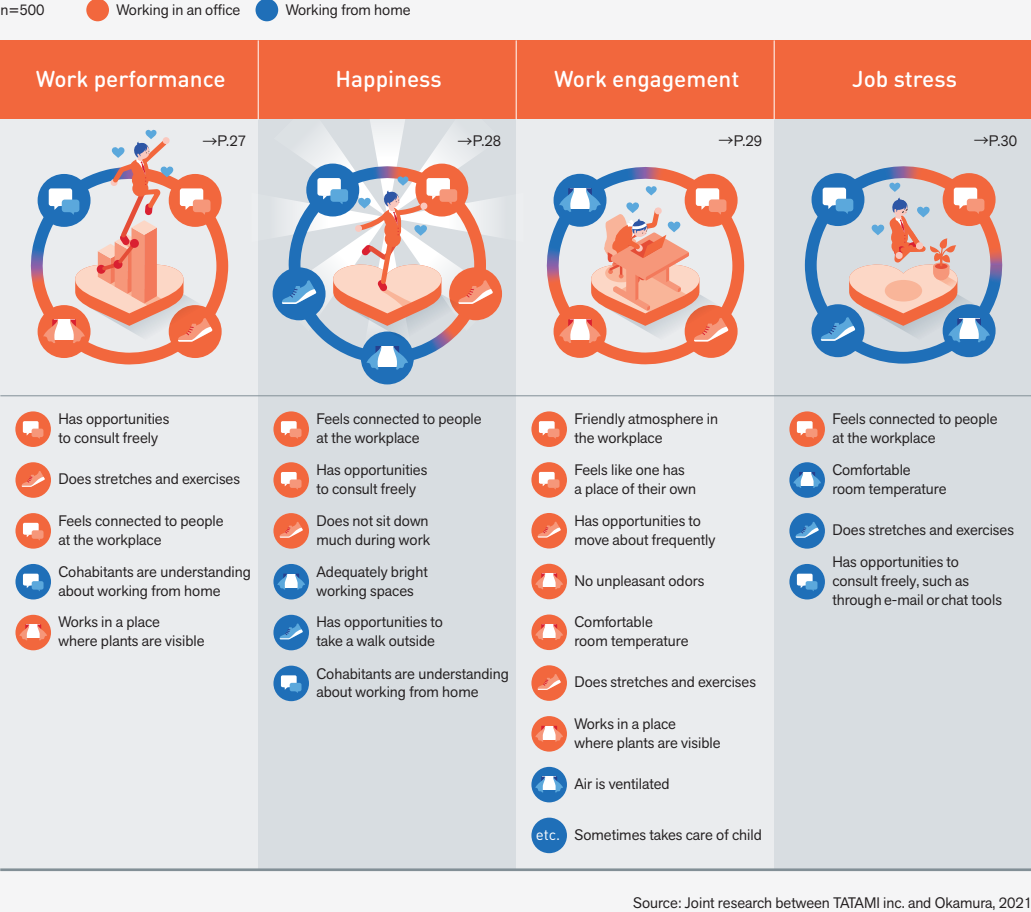
Looking at items that have a particularly large impact, we can see that job stress is related to “feeling connected to people at the workplace” when working in the office. It is considered that feeling connected to others at the workplace, such

as a sense of solidarity and togetherness, can alleviate one’s sense of isolation and thereby lower job stress.

When working from home, job stress is related to “comfortable room temperature” and “doing stretches and exercises”. While the air-conditioning is managed in an office, it is also considered important to be able to adjust the room temperature at home.

To maintain good health while continuing with hybrid work

Figure 7. Environment when working in an office or working from home, in relation to maintaining good mental health for hybrid workers



Last but not least, let us look at a list that shows how the working environment is related to the health condition of hybrid workers (Figure 7). We have organized the environments (office or home) related to each indicator of health condition shown in Figures 3 to 6.

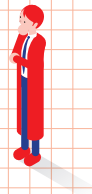
Based on the survey results, to maintain good health while continuing with hybrid work, items such as “feeling connected to people at the workplace” rank high in relation to working

in the office, suggesting that communication between members and positive relationships at the workplace are important.

When working from home, items related to comfort are listed, such as “adequately bright working spaces” and “comfortable room temperature.” Hence, it is considered important to pay attention to the indoor working environment, such as air, room temperature, and brightness, when working from home.

C O N C L U S I O N

Providing support to create connected office environments and comfortable home environments for maintaining good health at work



We conducted a survey with the intention of finding out what environments, not only in the office but also at home, can help workers to maintain good health at work after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the survey, we found that items related to communication when working in an office, and comfort when working from home, were related to the following indicators that capture the health condition of hybrid workers: psychological stress, degree of happiness, work engagement, and performance.

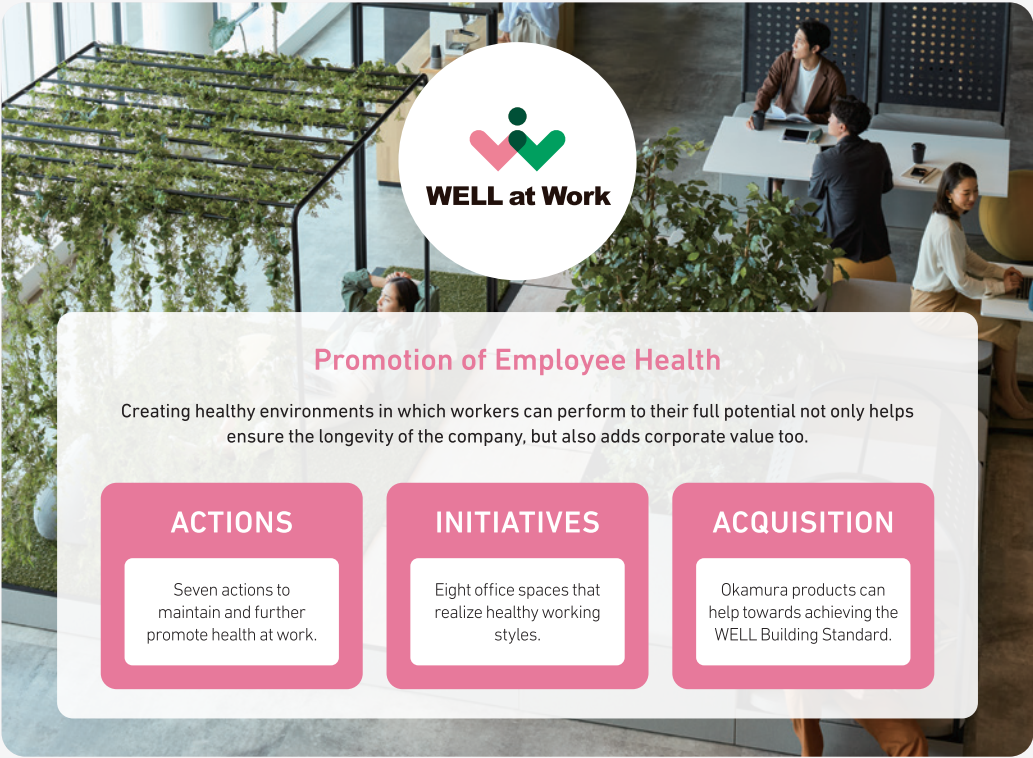

To promote hybrid work, the item “feeling connected to people at the workplace” was particularly related to multiple indicators for working in an office. This clearly showed, once again, the importance of communication. It is assumed that scenes that give one a sense of connectedness include not only speaking directly to other members in the workplace, but also being able to hear other members talking and sense the activities of other members. For example, there may be a need to put creative effort into designing spaces that

make it easier to be aware of other members at the workplace, such as setting up café spaces that members of multiple departments can use, or team bases that team members can drop by casually. In fact, according to past research*, users of team spaces set up in offices evaluate such spaces highly for strengthening the sense of togetherness of the team.

Items primarily related to comfort, such as room temperature and brightness, were listed in relation to working from home. Unlike working in the office, greater individual comfort is considered important when working from home. Based on this, it is necessary for companies to educate workers on how to improve the home-working environment and provide support for the necessary expenditures, so that workers can take independent steps to create a comfortable environment in their homes.

*Source: Okamura Corporation, “WORK MILL RESEARCH ISSUE 01,” 2019

Investing in the well-being of employees makes companies more powerful and energetic.



Promotion of Employee Health

Creating healthy environments in which workers can perform to their full potential not only helps ensure the longevity of the company, but also adds corporate value too.

<h4>ACTIONS</h4> <p>Seven actions to maintain and further promote health at work.</p>	<h4>INITIATIVES</h4> <p>Eight office spaces that realize healthy working styles.</p>	<h4>ACQUISITION</h4> <p>Okamura products can help towards achieving the WELL Building Standard.</p>
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The WELL Building Standard (WELL) for healthy office

WELL is a roadmap for creating and certifying spaces that advance human health and well-being. Developed over 10 years, WELL sets pathways for accomplishing health-first factors that help us to do our best work. Performance standards for design interventions, operational protocols and company-wide practices are verified by a third party.

Creating the WELL PLUS mark

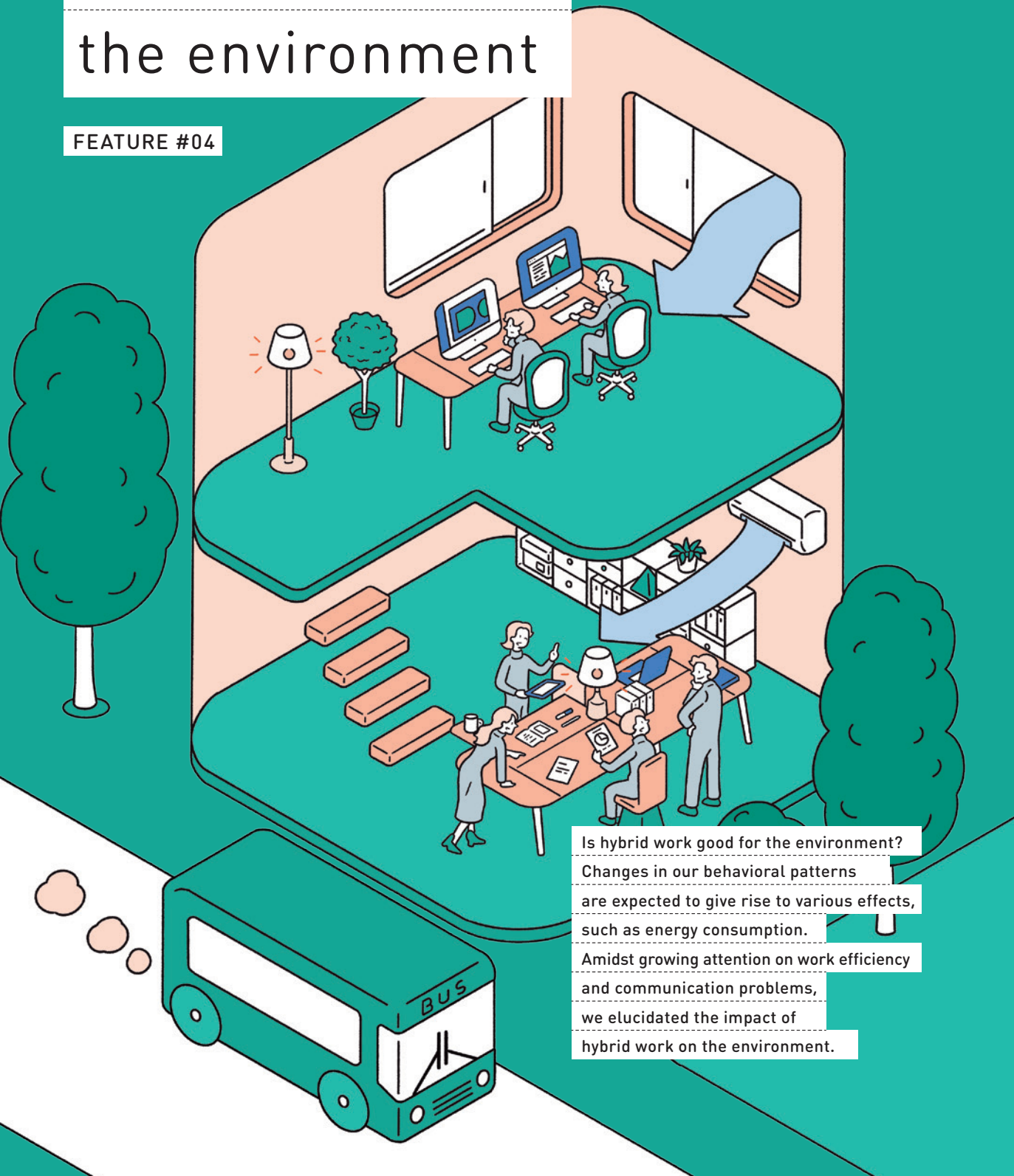


environments and creating offices.

At Okamura, we place the “WELL PLUS” mark on products that support the attaining of WELL certification, and we assist customers in improving office

Hybrid work and the environment

FEATURE #04

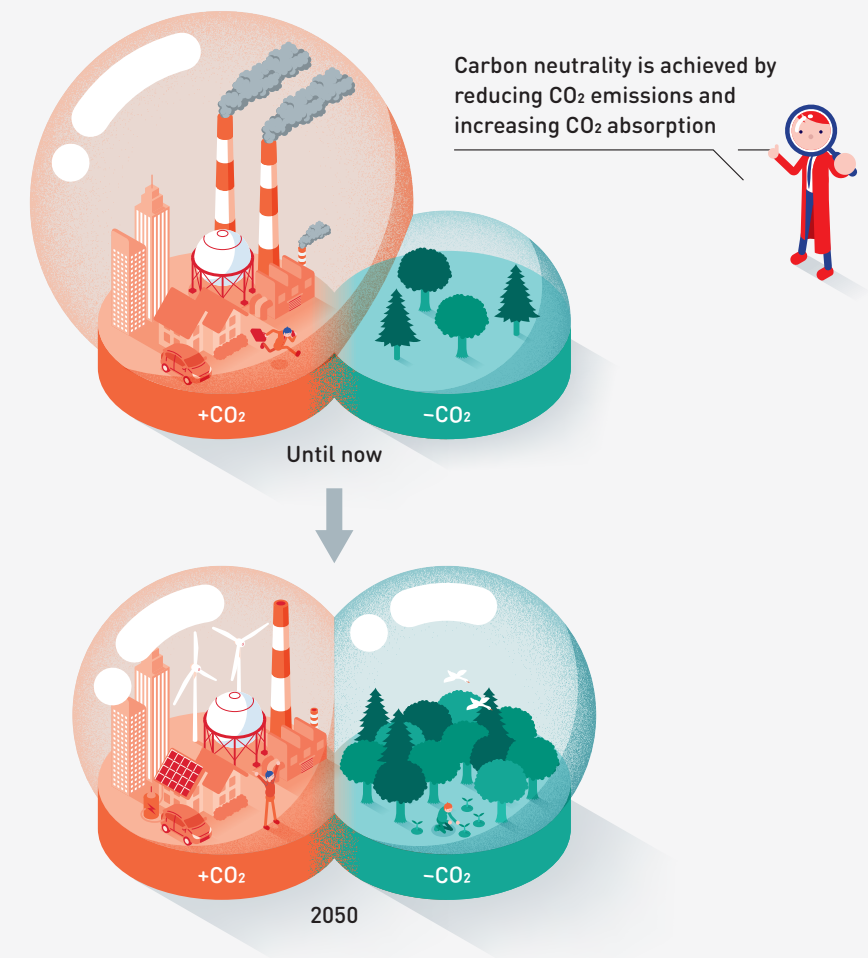


Is hybrid work good for the environment?
Changes in our behavioral patterns are expected to give rise to various effects, such as energy consumption. Amidst growing attention on work efficiency and communication problems, we elucidated the impact of hybrid work on the environment.

FEATURE #04

Does hybrid work impact the environment?

Figure 1. Concept of carbon neutrality



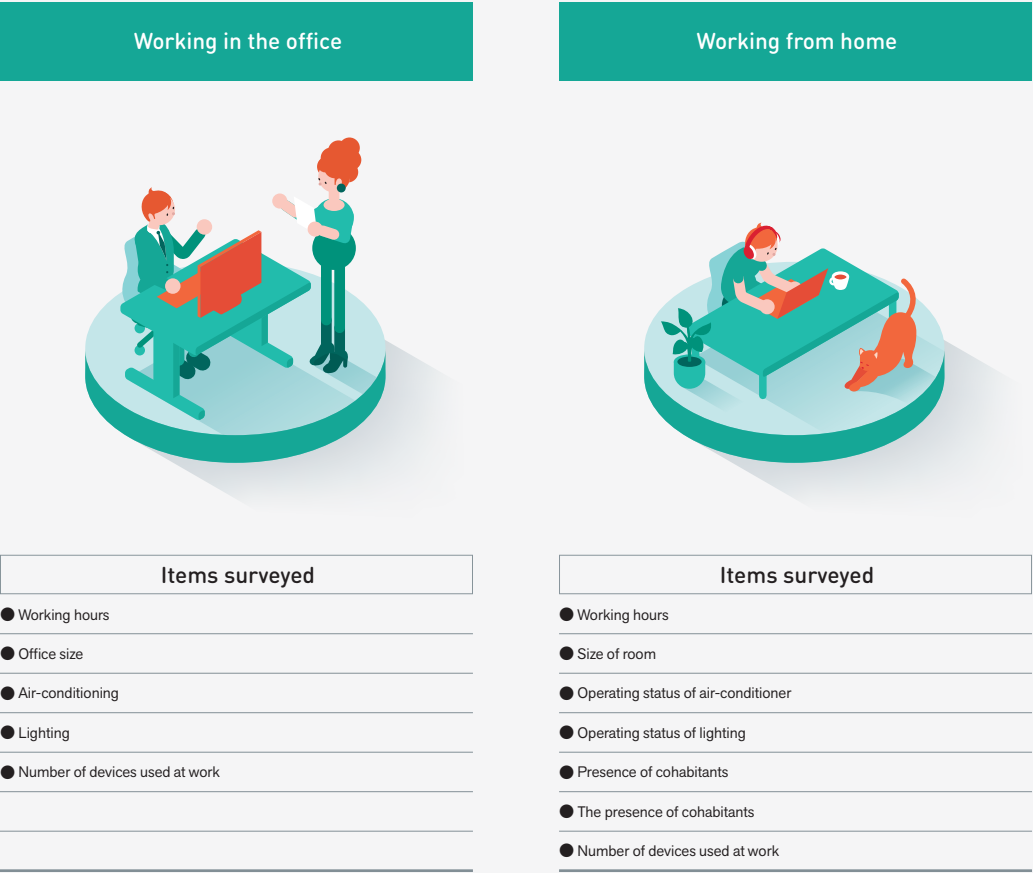
The Act on Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures, enacted in 1998, was revised in 2021. It establishes the goal of realizing a decarbonized society by 2050 (Figure 1). In addition to emissions reduction to be realized through the efforts of corporations, such as through environmental measures implemented in factories, would it be possible to also reduce environmental impact by changing the behavior of individual workers?

On the other hand, while hybrid work has become a widespread phenomenon due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we still do not know if this change in work style has led to an increase or decrease in CO₂ emissions. In view of that, Okamura and the National Institute for Environmental Studies engaged in a joint study to estimate these changes based on four items: office, home, commute, and various activities.

Explanation of survey items

Figure 2. Environmental impact accompanying hybrid work

Before the COVID-19 pandemic: Most workers commuted to offices to work / After the COVID-19 pandemic: Hybrid work becomes a widespread phenomenon

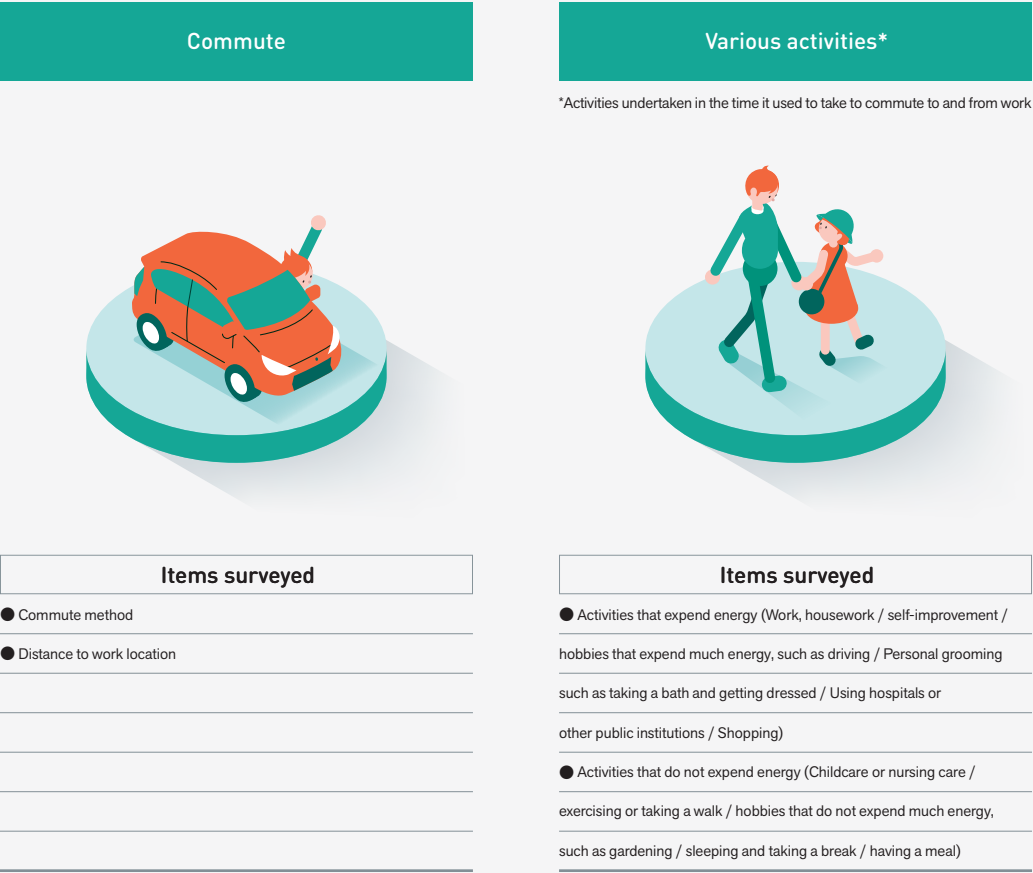


In this survey, the main elements generating CO₂ emissions when engaging in hybrid work were divided into four categories: working in the office, working from home, commute, and various activities. Respondents comprising 4,000 urban workers who are currently engaged in hybrid work were then asked to answer the survey items shown in Figure 2 for the period before the COVID-19 pandemic, and now (February 2022).

Firstly, changes in CO₂ emissions when working

in the office were estimated based on the size of the office and the operating statuses of air-conditioning and lighting. For this survey, the ideal values were calculated based on the assumption of turning off one person's portion of lighting and air-conditioning.

CO₂ emissions when working from home were calculated based on the usage status of air-conditioning, and lighting, and also based on the presence of cohabitants and their working status.



*Activities undertaken in the time it used to take to commute to and from work

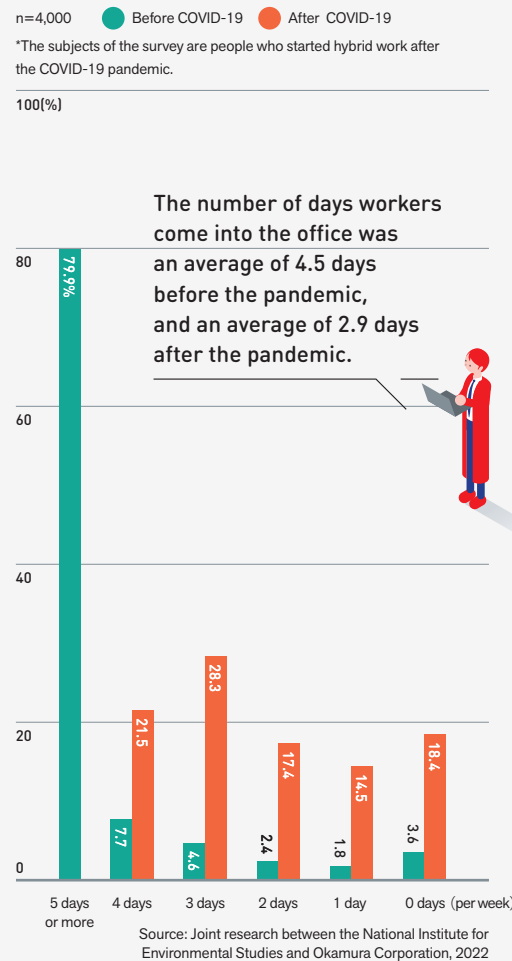
Source: Joint research between the National Institute for Environmental Studies and Okamura Corporation, 2022

With regard to commute, we made the assumption that CO₂ emissions remain unchanged when public transportation is used. This is because trains and buses do not reduce their service excessively. Changes in passenger occupancy rate do not have a significant impact on energy consumption. In this survey, changes in CO₂ emissions were calculated only for commutes involving the use of private vehicles, for which the greatest changes are observed.

We have found that workers spend less time commuting when they shift to hybrid work, and this frees up about four hours per week. "Various activities" refer to the activities that they use this time to engage in. Depending on what activities they replace the commuting time with, CO₂ emissions are expected to change. In this study, we examined the frequency of activities conducted in the time that was previously allocated to commuting and calculated the corresponding CO₂ emissions.

Changes to CO₂ emissions in the office

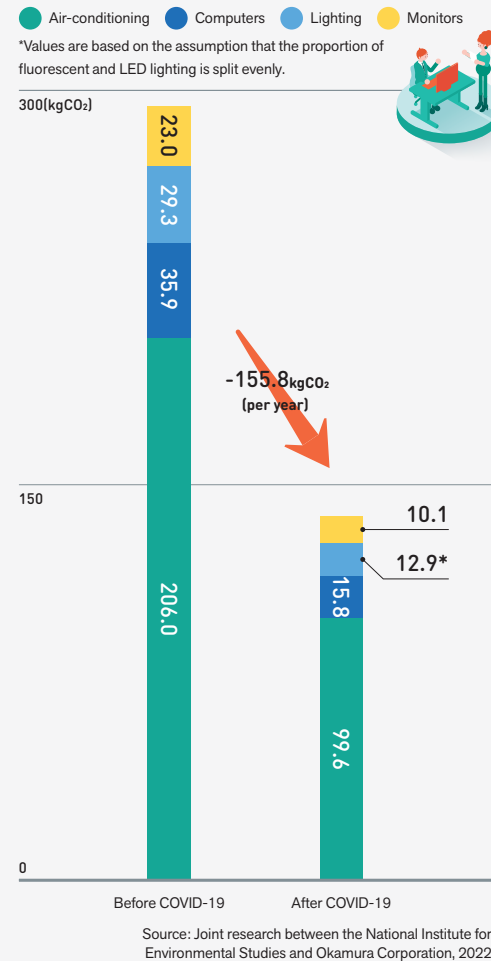
Figure 3. Number of days workers go to the office



Based on the number of days per week that workers come into the office pre- and post-pandemic, we calculated the changes in CO₂ emissions when using computers, monitors, lighting, and air-conditioning (Figure 3).

Air-conditioning made up the largest percentage of CO₂ emissions generated by offices, and as shown in Figure 4, it also has the greatest impact on CO₂ reduction. However, these results are calculated based on the ideal

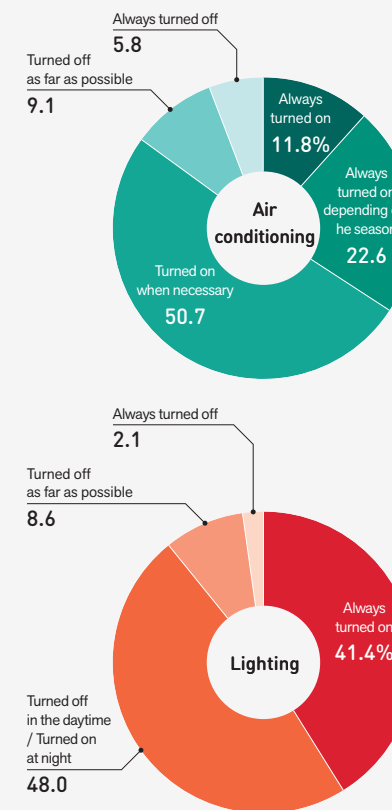
Figure 4. CO₂ emissions from an office (per person)



amount of reductions (ideal value) per person, and do not correspond to open-plan offices where air-conditioning and lighting are controlled together. The ideal value is calculated based on the assumption that each person who comes to work in the office works in a private room of about 8m² and does not generate energy consumption for that same area when not in the office (Figure 4). Realistically, the value for CO₂ emissions is likely to fall only marginally.

Changes in CO₂ emissions at home due to working from home

Figure 5. Usage status when working from home (after the COVID-19 pandemic)

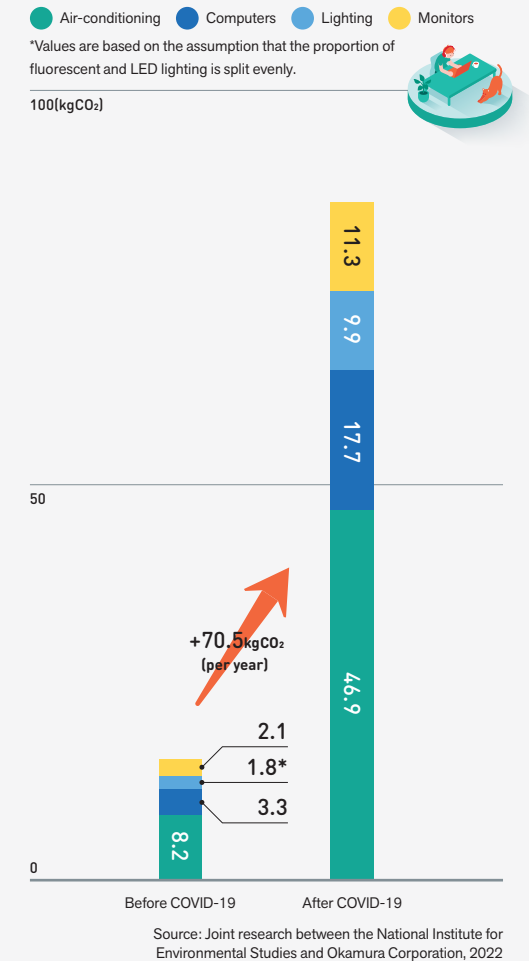


Source: Joint research between the National Institute for Environmental Studies and Okamura Corporation, 2022

The operating status of air-conditioning systems has the greatest impact on CO₂ emissions when working from home. Based on the results of the survey, many people turned the air-conditioning on or off as necessary. On the other hand, more than 40% of the respondents kept the lighting on at all times (Figure 5).

When actual changes in CO₂ emissions due to working from home were calculated, it was found that emissions increased by 70.5kgCO₂

Figure 6. CO₂ emissions from home (per person)

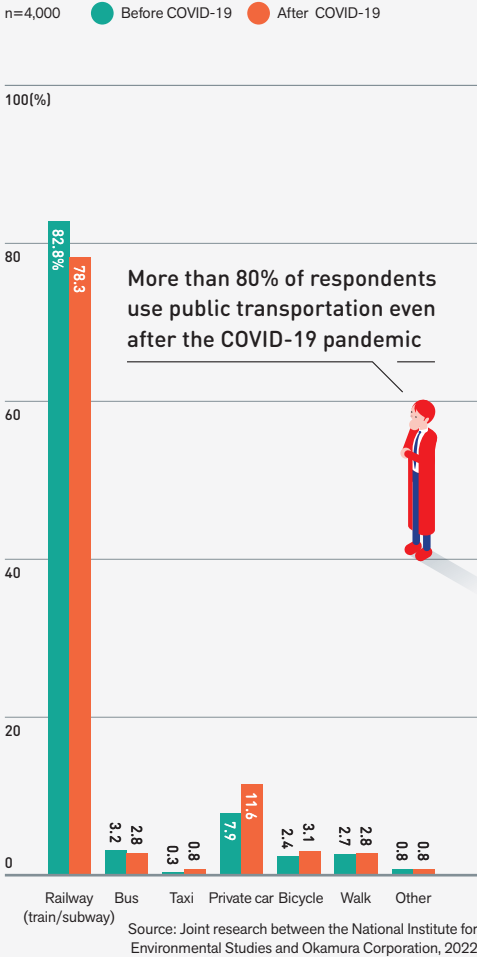


per person. While this is not such a large value when compared to the annual amount of CO₂ emissions per household, in view of the goal toward carbon neutrality, there is a need to note that CO₂ emissions are on a rising trend.

* According to the Ministry of the Environment's "Survey on the Actual Conditions of Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Residential Sector," annual CO₂ emissions per household in 2020 was 2.88tCO₂.

Changes in CO2 emissions from commuting

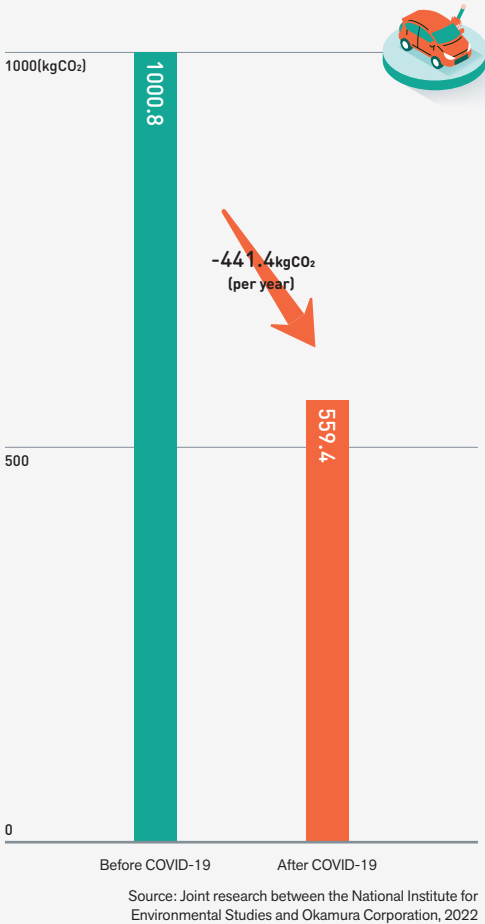
Figure 7. Changes in commute method



According to the results of the survey, many people are commuting by train, and when combined with the use of buses, more than 80% of the respondents use public transportation.

Figure 7 shows that commuting by private car has a significant impact on CO₂ emissions. While the number of private car users is increasing according to Figure 7, Figure 3 shows that the frequency of going to work at the office has declined. Hence, when the combined impact of the

Figure 8. Annual CO₂ emissions (per person) from commuting by private car



two trends is considered, CO₂ emissions can be estimated to be greatly reduced (Figure 8). We have learned that reducing private car commutes due to hybrid work certainly decreases CO₂ emissions. For railway, which has the largest number of users, CO₂ emissions remain unchanged in most cases because it continues to operate on the same schedule even if the occupancy rate falls.

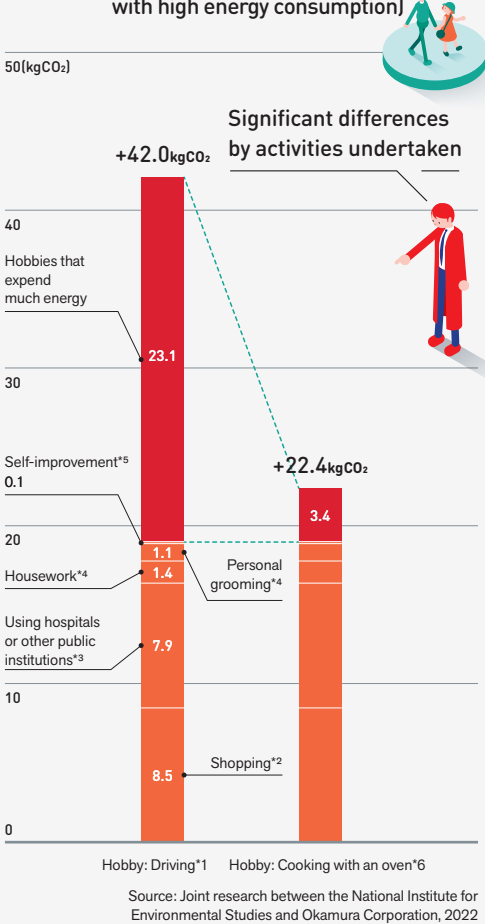
Various activities and changes in CO2 emissions

Figure 9. Increase in activity frequency (per person per week)



It is considered that reducing the number of commutes will free up approximately four hours per week, and we considered the changes that allocating that time on other activities can have on environmental impact. Of the 12 activities defined in Figure 2, we examined six activities that consume energy consumption, while excluding “work” which is counted as emissions accompanying working from home. For hobbies that expend much energy, it is important to note that the increase in CO₂

Figure 10. Annual CO₂ emissions from various activities (per person, by hobbies with high energy consumption)







emissions can vary greatly depending on whether gasoline or electricity is used (Figure 10).

*1 Assumption of driving at 30 km/h in a private car
*2 Assumption that 1/4 of the people use private cars to reach destinations 2.5 km away
*3 Assumption that half of the people use private cars to reach destinations 2.5 km away
*4 Assumption that 500Wh of energy is consumed in 1/4 of the activity time
*5 Assumption that half of the people engaged in the activity use computers (expending about 50Wh of energy)
*6 Assumption that cooking is carried out in a 1200W oven

Summary of changes to four forms of environmental impact

Figure 11. Changes to CO₂ emissions and proposals to reduce emissions

Working in the office	Working from home	Commute	Various activities
			
Changes in CO ₂ emissions after the COVID-19 pandemic			
Marginal decrease*	Increase	Marginal decrease	Marginal increase
Main reasons			
Reduced use of air-conditioning	Increased use of air-conditioning	Reduced frequency of commutes by private car	Increased time spent on hobbies that expend lots of energy
What we can do to reduce CO ₂ emissions			
● Introduce "free address" workplace arrangements	● Introduce outside air and sunlight in place of air-conditioning and lighting	● Commute on public transportation instead of private cars	● Minimize activities that involve gasoline consumption, such as the use of private cars
● Reduce office area ("right-sizing")	● Work in the same room if multiple people are working from home	● Use online meetings to reduce unnecessary business trips	● Minimize hobbies that expend lots of energy
● Introduce area-based air-conditioning and lighting			
● Introduce outside air and sunlight in place of air-conditioning and lighting			

Source: Joint research between the National Institute for Environmental Studies and Okamura Corporation, 2022

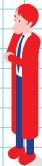
The results of this survey showed that increase in home-working frequency led to an increase in CO₂ emissions at home, while CO₂ emissions did not fall proportionately to the reduction in the number of days that workers come into the office for. Furthermore, with regard to the reduction in commutes, CO₂ emissions remained largely unchanged when public transportation is used, and only fell when private cars were used for the commute. It was found that changes in various activities brought about by the reduction in

commuting time brought about significant changes to the increase in CO₂ emissions as a result of the activities that commutes were replaced with. While simple addition cannot be carried out because there are also items calculated based on ideal values, the final increase in emissions exceeds the reduction. Hence, we can presume that CO₂ emissions increase as a result of hybrid work.

*The reduction effect in Figure 4 is an ideal value, and the actual reduction effect is considered to be lower.

C O N C L U S I O N

Changing the work style changes the environmental impact — Let's start by understanding the contents of the changes



According to the results of this survey, we have learned that hybrid work in urban areas increases environmental impact. While we have, to a certain extent, predicted the emergence of new forms of energy consumption from the diversification of workplaces, a result of the survey was understanding that CO₂ emissions increase considerably especially when working from home. However, although hybrid work increases CO₂ emissions, it would be difficult for all workers to return to the work style of gathering at the same place at the same time, as they did before. In short, there is a need to work on environmentally friendly efforts while continuing with hybrid work. Under the current circumstances, many companies are likely to be experiencing a fall in the number of days that workers come into the office, and a fall in population density in the office. However, many offices are probably not yet optimized to a scale that is suitable for hybrid work. Okamura's survey also revealed that, accompanying the popularization of hybrid work, there is a growing call for "free address" and

"group address" workplace arrangements rather than having a fixed seat in the office.* Managers probably also want to reduce costs by optimizing the office area. By promoting the optimization of office area and functions, it is possible to reduce environmental impact while engaging in hybrid work. In the case of working from home, it is also possible to minimize CO₂ emissions by actively introducing outside air and sunlight, and reducing the duration of use for lighting and air-conditioning. To date, many companies have probably strived to be eco-friendly in relation to "work." However, it is also important for individuals to work in eco-friendly ways when working from home. Through cooperation between companies and individuals, we can move toward reducing CO₂ emissions while engaging in hybrid work comfortably.

*Source: Okamura Corporation, "KNOWLEDGE WORK DESIGN REVIEW 2021," 2021



SPECIAL INTERVIEW

Yuko
Kanamori

National Institute for
Environmental Studies, Japan
Social Systems Division,
Senior Researcher

Pages 34 – 43 introduce
the results of a study on hybrid work
and the environment,
conducted jointly by the National Institute
for Environmental Studies, Japan,
and Okamura Corporation.
In addition to this analysis,
we also spoke to Dr. Yuko Kanamori,
who conducts research on the relationship
between lifestyle and environmental load generation,
specifically about the impact of hybrid work
on the environment.

“ Relationship between carbon
neutrality and hybrid work ”

Cross-disciplinary estimation of the impact of
work styles on the environment

Dr. Yuko Kanamori, Senior Researcher at the National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan, has continuously been engaged in research on lifestyle changes as the research subject, while valuing her personal experience and feeling as a consumer. Since her student days, she has consistently focused on the theme of estimating environmental load of the household sector. This is because she feels that anything that is related to the household is related to herself, and because she is able to conceptualize it concretely.

Regarding the “Analysis on the Impact that the Increase in Hybrid Work in Cities has on CO₂ Emissions” (pp.34-43, Special Feature 4 “Hybrid work and the environment”) that was conducted jointly by Okamura Corporation and the National Institute for Environmental Studies, Dr. Kanamori commented, “Until now, research fields related to energy consumption and environment have been divided into specialized fields such as industry, households, and transportation. The subject of this study, hybrid work, cannot be analyzed based on my areas of expertise alone, so we set up a cross-disciplinary research team. Integrating multiple fields of research to analyze a single change is a unique challenge that has not been seen in environmental research so far.”

The study showed that hybrid work, which involves moving between the office and home, increased the burden on the environment. Concerning this result, Dr. Kanamori expressed her views as follows, “In the preliminary stage before

we commenced this study, we held the hypothesis that environmental load is increased. With the start of hybrid work, energy consumed in the home has certainly increased. In addition to using air-conditioning in the room that serves as an office, gas may also be used to. Furthermore, the increase in hybrid work does not necessarily correspond with a dramatic fall in the frequency of public transportation services used for commuting, such as trains and buses. It would be possible to reduce environmental impact if we can make a clear choice between either having everyone work in the office or having everyone work from home, but it is difficult to do that. From a practical standpoint, we think that the results do not vary significantly from our hypothesis.”

In the past, researchers who are engaged in environmental research in fields such as mine would be turned down if they were to approach companies to propose conducting research on environmental impact. Today, however, the trend has been reversed and companies are the ones approaching researchers.

In fact, if companies with a global presence do not take earnest steps toward achieving carbon neutrality, they are not expected to develop in the medium- to long-term, and there is even a possibility that their trade will shrink. That is how serious the pressures from overseas companies are. Dr. Kanamori continued, “Even within Japan, non-life insurance companies and other insurance companies are taking moves to exclude companies that are not actively engaged in decarbonization initiatives. Depending on the status of their efforts, there may even be cases where they cannot take up insurance policies.” The results of environmental efforts by

“ Think about what you can do in the office and at home ”

companies are shown clearly in quantitative terms in environmental reports and other disclosures. With such clear evaluation, they have no choice but to be proactive.

What companies can do in the office is to review operations

When companies aim to achieve carbon neutrality, it is common for them to adopt measures such as reviewing factory equipment if they are in the manufacturing industry. In that case, what kind of actions can they take in the offices? Dr. Kanamori explained that.

“Firstly, they should review how offices operate as well as the physical space. If hybrid working were to become an established fact in the future, office attendance rate would be even lower than before. When that happens, it will no longer be necessary to constantly maintain a desk and seat for each worker, as we have done until now. It will then be possible to abolish fixed seating and adopt a “free address” layout, and to reduce the office area corresponding to attendance rate. In fact, there appears to be a growing number of companies that are taking such actions. If this movement spreads, society as a whole will begin to move toward the direction of reducing environmental impact. It would be even more ideal if the people who turn up to work in the office come together to use the lighting and air-conditioning in just one area. However, this may be difficult to realize as there are currently many offices that still occupy a large space, and equipment is controlled across an entire floor in most cases. It would be great if lighting and air-conditioning could be

adjusted by each area.”
It is important to continue having this awareness as we move into the future. Dr. Kanamori continued, “The results of our analysis this time show that it is impossible to reduce CO₂ significantly in cities with the way in which we currently use offices. I personally thought that only forward-thinking companies would abolish fixed seating and introduce a “free address” layout, but such office designs may become the norm in the future from the perspective of environmental friendliness.”

Can individuals take ownership over environmental issues?

As hybrid work becomes increasingly common today, it is vital not only for companies, but also for individuals at home to put effort into reducing environmental impact. So, what can individuals do?
“If working from home, decide on the working space in the house and be mindful of controlling the equipment, such as turning on the air-conditioner only in that room. You can also leave the windows open in seasons when air-conditioning is not needed. If you are not attending an online meeting, for example, it is also good to take actions such as going out and using a library nearby. It is not necessary to endure too much or overdo things. Nevertheless, as it is very difficult to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality, we need to continue finding initiatives to reduce CO₂ emissions and putting them into practice in our work styles and lifestyles.”

As a result of the study, we were confronted by the reality that the popularization of hybrid work increases environmental impact. However, Dr.



Kanamori views the popularization of hybrid work positively.

“It is not practical to return completely to the situation in the past where everyone came together to work at the same time. Forcing ourselves to board a crowded train during the morning rush hour and exhausting ourselves in order to go to work in the office, is not good for our health. This is not limited to hybrid work. It is important to explore and find ways of reducing environmental impact while taking a positive view of our behavioral changes.”

Diversified work styles and lifestyles mean that we have entered an era in which we should work out strategies to suit the respective circumstances, rather than having everyone practice an action as a single “correct answer.” This is precisely why each individual company or person must consider

how they should work in order to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Yuko Kanamori
Senior Researcher, Social Systems Division, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan. Obtained her doctoral degree (engineering) from the Graduate School of Engineering, Kyoto University in 2007 and joined the National Institute for Environmental Studies after that, where she has remained till the present day. Her publications include Chikyuu Ondanka no Jiten (Global Warming Encyclopedia) (2014) edited and written by the National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan.

TOPICS

Okamura’s Initiatives
for Social Issues

TOPIC

01

Initiatives for SDGs and ESG

Large-scale natural disasters, resource depletion, declining birthrate, aging population, and IT risks.

Our social environment is constantly changing, including the continuous decline of the working population and changes in how and where we work.

For a company to grow and develop while increasing its value, it is important to take initiatives based on the perspectives of the SDGs and ESG management to resolve these issues.

SDGs

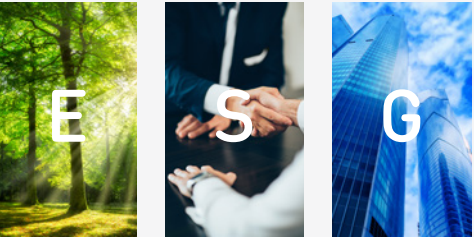
Sustainable Development Goals



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a set of international development goals which was adopted by the UN Sustainable Development Summit held in September 2015. It consists of 17 goals and 169 targets.

ESG

Environment, Social, Governance



Environment Social Governance

ESG is a set of standards that measures a business's impact on the environment and society as well as how robust and transparent its governance is in terms of company leadership, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights.

TOPIC

02

Okamura’s Proposals for Solving Social Issues

The Okamura Group promotes sustainability initiatives throughout its business activities in order to contribute to the realization of a society in which all people can work and live actively and with a smile.

Global Environment



Since 1997, Okamura has established environmental standards for its products based on the concept of the “GREEN WAVE,” with which we create, and subsequently ride, a green (environmentally friendly) wave. We contribute to the sustainable society by creating environmentally friendly products. We aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and have set a goal of a 50% reduction in CO₂ emissions in 2030 compared to 2020.

Well-being



From 2019, Okamura is promoting “WELL at Work” to create healthy spaces. By creating spaces that maintain and promote the health of workers, we support our clients' health management and help them improve their business. Within the company, the “WiL-BE” initiative, to reform the way we work, is also in place to promote the health of our own employees.

Initiatives for SDGs and ESG



Consideration for the Environment

Operating as a company with a high environmental burden comes with wide number of risks – not only for the planet as a whole but also as a business. In order to be a successful company that has longevity, the environmental initiatives are paramount.

FACILITY

Reduction of the environmental burden of our production facilities and methods.

PRODUCT

Promotion of circular design and seven internal environmental product criteria standards.

SERVICE

Office spaces designed with the UN SDGs in mind and a newly introduced carbon-offset program*.

*only available in Japan

PRODUCT

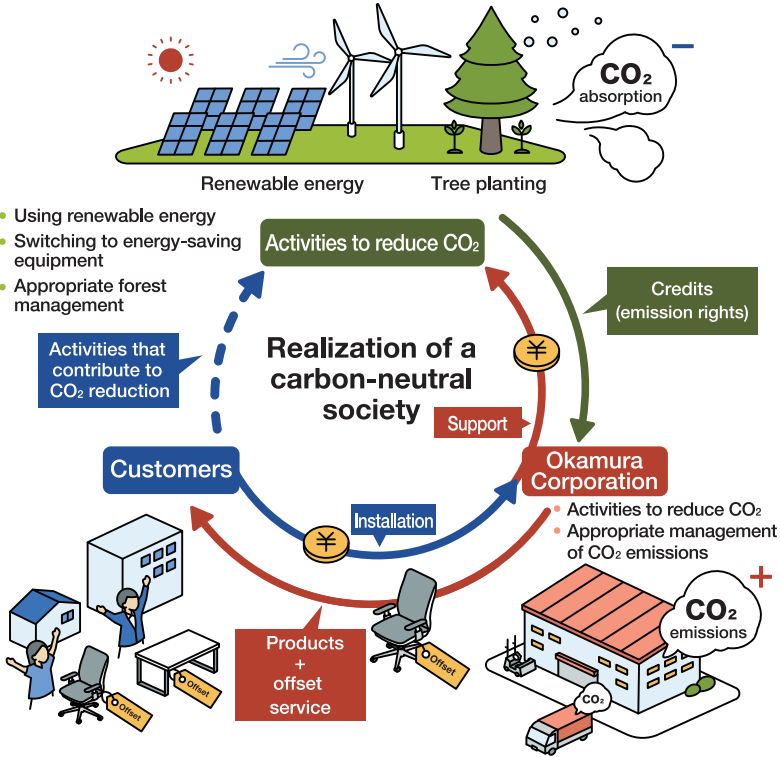
GREEN WAVE / 7CRITERIA



As part of our efforts to solve environmental issues, we have established seven criteria for product development: Resource saving, Recycling ability, Long service life, Use of recycled materials, Reusability, Safety and environmental protection, and Energy conservation. We certify products that passed the criteria as Green Wave products.

SERVICE

Carbon Offset Program



Okamura monitors CO₂ emissions throughout the product life cycle for office furniture products—from the procurement of raw materials to manufacturing, sales, and disposal after use.

In January 2022, we started our carbon offset program in which customers can purchase products with CO₂ emission credits.

*Only available in Japan

Please visit our website for more details



FACILITY | Initiatives at Our Production Bases

Okamura Fuji Plant

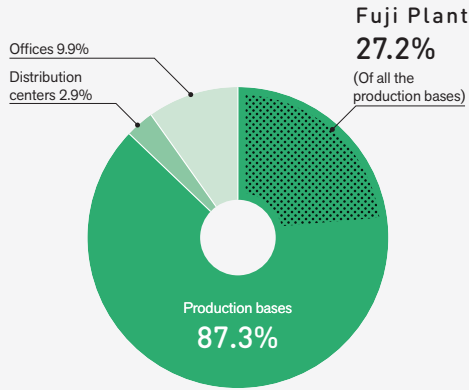


The Fuji Plant is an important production base for Okamura Corporation, where it produces a wide range of products including store display fixtures and distribution systems. As a large amount of heat, electricity, and water is used in each manufacturing process, we are continuously engaged in efforts to enhance energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We leverage on our location at the base of Mt. Fuji, making the greatest use of underflow water for industrial use and regular consumption.

We also strive to conserve energy by utilizing groundwater heat, which maintains water temperature throughout the year. In these ways, we aim to strike a balance between our economic activities and the realization of a sustainable society.

Address: 102-1 Osaka, Gotemba City, Shizuoka Prefecture
Start of operations: January 1970
Facilities: Premises 85,763m², buildings 51,881m² (total floor area)
Main items produced: Store display fixtures, distribution system equipment and products, partitions, equipment for different markets

FY2021
Percentage of CO₂ emissions
by each of Okamura's business sites



*1 Source: Data from the Greenhouse Gas Inventory Office of Japan, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan (Confirmed and reported values for Japan's greenhouse gas emissions (FY1990 – 2020))

Looking at the breakdown of CO₂ emissions in Japan, we can see that the percentage of CO₂ emissions generated by the industrial sector, including the manufacturing industry, makes up more than a third of all emissions.*¹ In the case of general manufacturers, production activities make up a large part of the CO₂ emissions. Hence, the Okamura Group, which operates a manufacturing business, is faced with the important question of what measures to formulate in this respect. Looking at the breakdown of CO₂ emissions for the whole of the Okamura Group, we can see that production bases generate 87.3% of the emissions, of which the Fuji Plant (shown on the left) contributes to 27.2% of the emissions. In order to achieve carbon neutrality, the reality is that it is not sufficient to only reduce CO₂ emissions; rather, there is also a need to take actions that go one step further.

MESSAGE

Future initiatives at the Fuji Plant

The Fuji Plant supplies products for Okamura's core businesses of office environments, commercial environments, and distribution systems. It is a large-scale production base that has more painting lines than the other plants. Its production processes require much energy to power, so it can be described as a plant with a high environmental load. For this reason, we are constantly mindful of putting effort into reducing environmental impact and realizing carbon neutrality. Alongside efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we are also engaged in "ACORN" activities aimed at realizing coexistence with nature as a way of reducing environmental impact. As a

part of these activities, we have drawn up a plan to create a biotope inside the Fuji Plant premises, and hope to utilize it as a space for employees to learn about biodiversity and conservation of the natural environment, and to put these ideas into practice. By transforming the Fuji Plant into a hub for engaging in exchanges with people from the neighboring districts through environmental activities, we hope to strengthen recognition of the Okamura Group as a friendly company.

Executive Officer
General Manager, Plant
Department II, Production Division
Miyoshi Kurihara



* Information is current as of November 2022

Creating a team hub in the office

RESEARCH



The COVID-19 pandemic triggered the spread of hybrid work, making it more difficult to share the statuses of team members. In light of that, we conducted a survey on the office set-up required if workers needed a place to gather as a team.

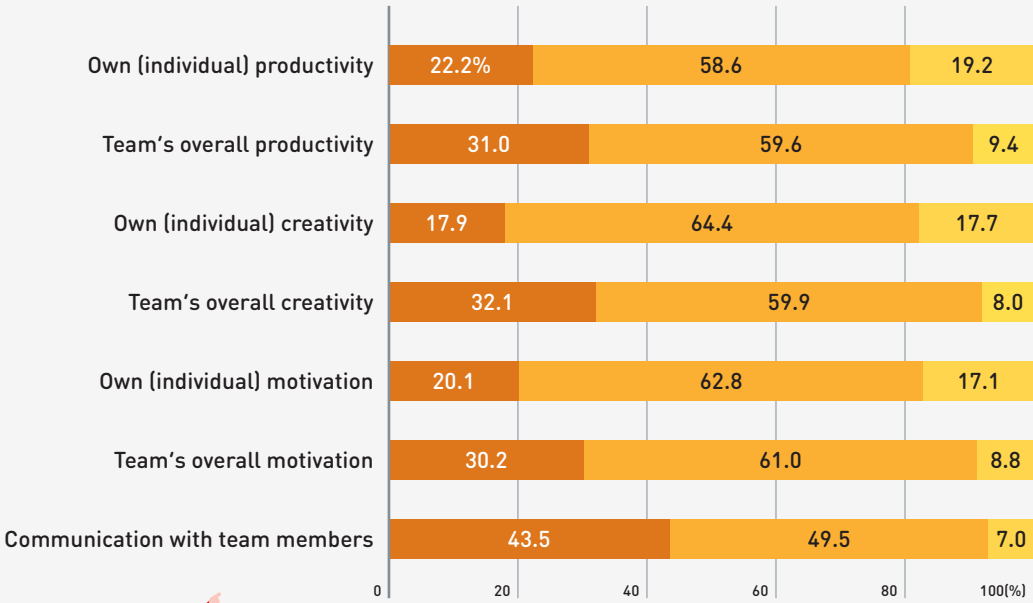
RESEACH

Differences in work styles and impact on workers

Figure 1. Impact of different work styles

n=4,239

● Better for everyone to work in the office ● Better to work in a hybrid style that combines in-person and remote work ● Better for everyone to work remotely



Few people think that it is better for everyone to work remotely

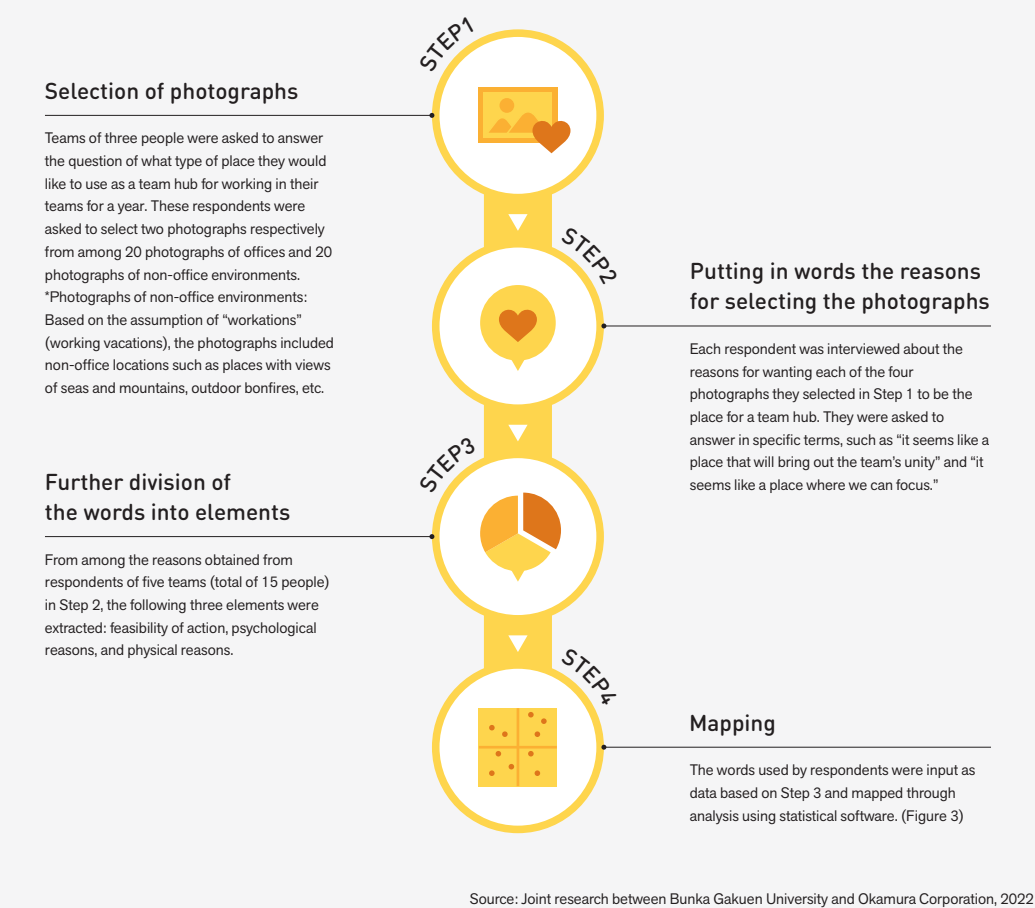
Source: Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment, Okamura Corporation, 2022

With the popularization of hybrid work, there are probably many workers who feel the respective merits of working in the office and working remotely. We asked 4,239 workers who have experienced remote work about the impact that differences in work styles have on productivity and motivation (Figure 1). The results of the survey showed that more than half of the respondents answered that it is "better to work in a hybrid style that combines in-person and remote work" for many items, while

more than 30% of the respondents answered that it is "better for everyone to work in the office" across all four items related to teams. This was more than those who respondents similarly for the items related to individuals. In particular, more than 40% of the workers responded that it is "better for everyone to work in the office" with respect to "communication with team members." These results suggest that there is a need to create spaces in offices to support teamwork.

What do workers demand of a team hub?

Figure 2. Flow of survey on team hubs



When workers engage in teamwork, what kind of place would they like to use as their meeting hub? Based on the assumption of working as a team for one year, respondents were surveyed on the characteristics of places that they consider to be desirable team hubs.

Firstly, 20 photographs showing scenes in offices were prepared, alongside 20 photographs showing natural environments such as seas and mountains as well as other non-office locations. Respondents were

then asked to select a total of four photographs of places where they want their team hubs to be located and to hold meetings with their teams, comprising two photographs each of offices and non-office environments.

After that, respondents were interviewed about the specific reasons for their photograph selection, so as to derive the elements that workers demand of team hubs. The results were then mapped on statistical software to produce more objective data.

Four characteristics of team hubs

Figure 3. Four characteristics that workers demand of team hubs, and the representative elements

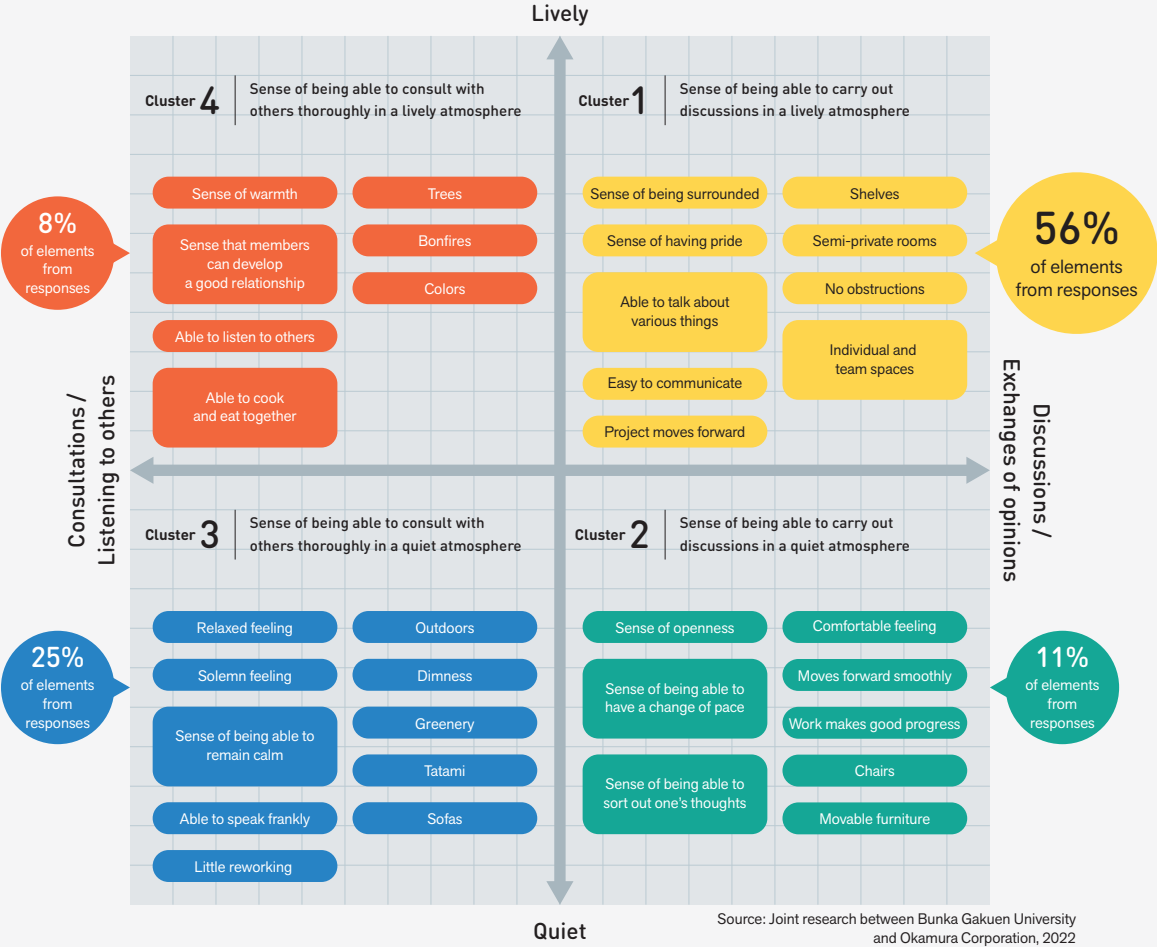


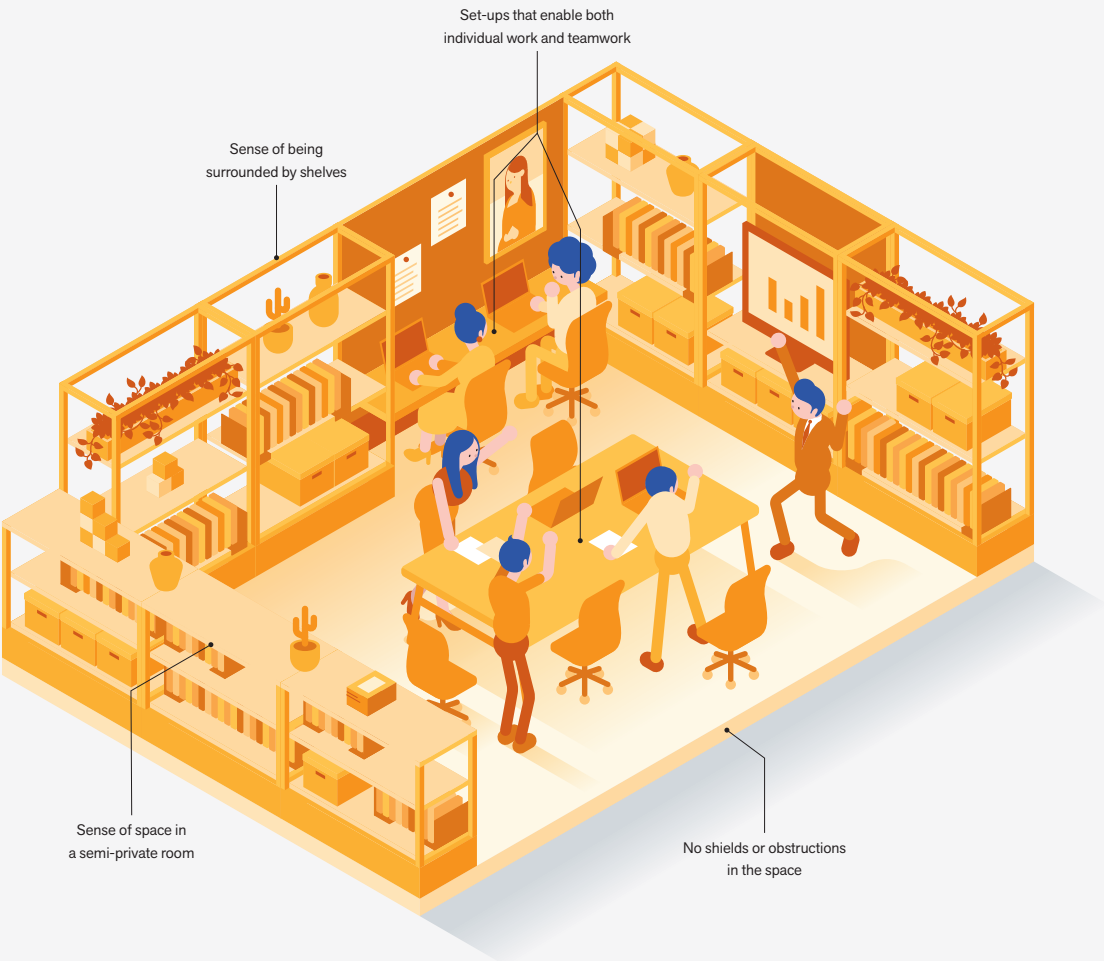
Figure 3 shows the mapping results of the elements respondents demand of team hubs.

We can see that the elements can be divided into Clusters 1 to 4, along the axes of communication types (discussions and consultations), and lively versus quiet atmospheres. In the process of classifying the elements in Clusters 1 to 4, we found that close to 60% of the responses fell under Cluster 1. Based on this, we can say that the places that many workers wish to use as their

team hubs are places with a "sense of being able to carry out discussions in a lively atmosphere." Apart from this, three other clusters were also observed: "Sense of being able to carry out discussions in a quiet atmosphere," "Sense of being able to consult with others thoroughly in a quiet atmosphere," and "Sense of being able to consult with others thoroughly in a lively atmosphere." Now, we shall look at the elements needed to create hubs for each cluster in the office.

Four models of team hubs

Cluster 1. Sense of being able to carry out discussions in a lively atmosphere

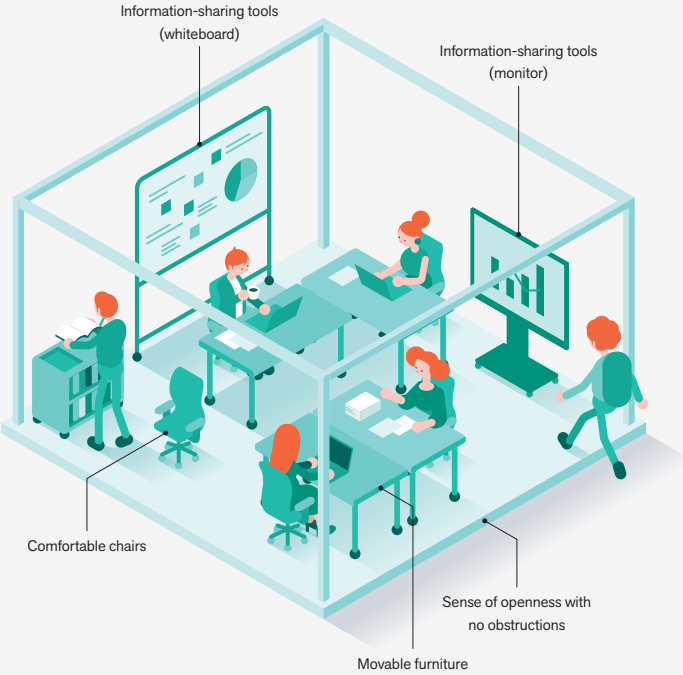


Cluster 1 is characterized by an emphasis on elements such as a sense of team unity and set-ups that a team can take pride in. This is based on the expectation that projects will be able to move forward while communicating within the team. For example, they gave opinions such as “Shelves make me feel surrounded and that my back is protected, and they feel like a team hub, so makes the work move forward more easily” and “A semi-private room feels team-like, and gives me the sense of being able to talk about

various things and work together with others, so that projects can move forward easily.” Based on these responses, the ideal team hub can be realized through physical elements such as “semi-private rooms,” “no shields or obstructions,” “shelves,” and “individual and team working spaces.” As we also touched on in Figure 3, more than half of the elements provided by respondents are included in Cluster 1, and we can say that these are the characteristics of team hubs that many people demand.

Cluster 2. Sense of being able to carry out discussions in a quiet atmosphere

Cluster 2 places emphasis on comfortable spaces that are open, where members can sort out their thoughts while having a change of pace. The background to this is the expectation of being able to respond flexibly to tasks, and that work can proceed smoothly and efficiently in such an environment. Through physical elements such as movable furniture, multi-functional tools such as monitors and whiteboards that also serve as partitions, and comfortable chairs, it is possible to create an environment that meets this expectation.

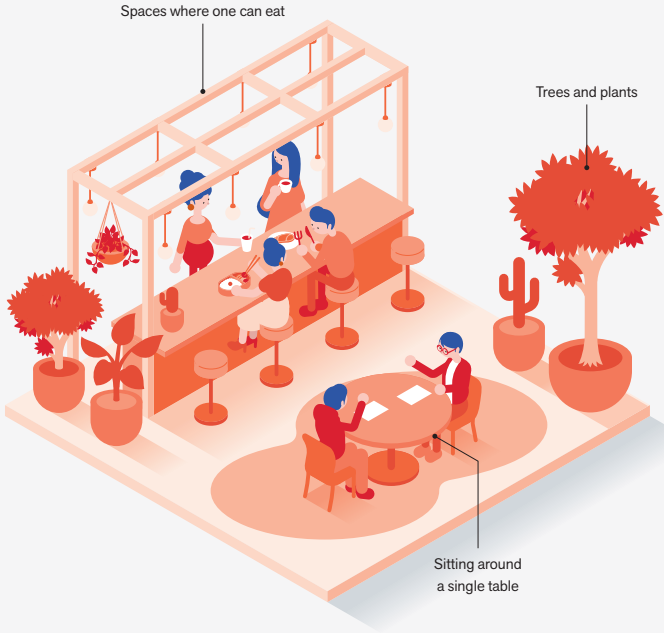


Cluster 3. Sense of being able to consult with others thoroughly in a quiet atmosphere



Cluster 3 is characterized by an emphasis on a relaxed sensation and quiet atmosphere. This is based on the expectation of being able to make decisions calmly, speak frankly to team members, and form a consensus. An environment that facilitates relaxation can be created by bringing in elements of nature. Such an environment can be realized through physical elements such as sofas or tatami mats, which create a different stance and distance with others, in comparison with those in the conduct of business.

Cluster 4. Sense of being able to consult with others thoroughly in a lively atmosphere



Cluster 4 is characterized by an emphasis on a space that enables team members to spend time in a warm atmosphere, to engage in casual conversation and listen to others in a calm atmosphere. This is backed by the expectation that team members will be able to develop good relationships. Through set-ups that allow members to cook and eat together, as well as gathering to share unusual and exciting experiences such as bonfires outdoors, a warm atmosphere is created that can help to build good relationships.

Feedback from those using team hubs

Okamura has established team hubs in our offices, which are in active operation. Users of these team hubs have given the following feedback.

When it is difficult to consult with team members through a causal conversation or chat, we can visit the team hub to meet up with them. Although we come to the office less frequently than before, the availability of such spaces helps us by facilitating easy communication with team members.

When we want to get someone's opinions toward our own ideas, we ask them to write their opinions on the bulletin board inside the room. We place little gifts for one another in the room, and this gives us a sense that we are communicating with other team members even if we do not meet in person.

C O N C L U S I O N

In the era of hybrid work, there is a need for hubs that match the characteristics of each team



Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the premise was that "working" = "coming together to work." However, this mindset has collapsed and led us to question the significance and meaning of "coming together." What kind of places do we seek for meeting up with other members of our teams? This survey revealed the characteristics and specific space criteria of the places that serve as team hubs.

The survey showed that the places that respondents wish to use as team hubs are characterized by "type of communication" (discussions or consultations) and "atmosphere" (lively or quiet). More than half of the workers appear to seek places where they can "carry out discussions in a lively atmosphere" to use as their team hubs. This provides us with an important hint when designing the spaces for teams to gather at.

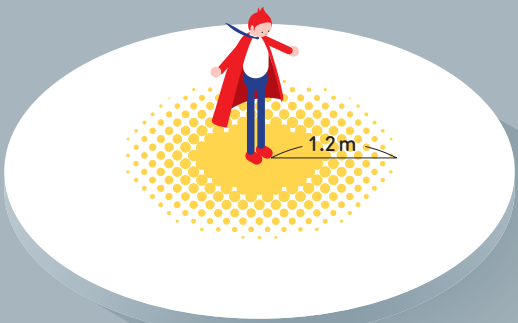
On the other hand, a certain number of respondents also seek places where they can "consult with others thoroughly in a quiet atmosphere" as their team hubs. This is a different form of communication from engaging in

discussions or exchanging opinions. As suggested by the keywords used by workers, such as "able to listen to others" and "able to speak frankly," the respondents appear to consider the team hub as a space for engaging in activities that contrast with the characteristics of being "proactive" or "lively." We also obtained keywords such as "able to remain calm," "relaxed sensation," and "comfortable sensation," showing that there are also teams that seek a "quiet atmosphere" in an office.

If your team is facing difficulties communicating with one another, how about trying to create a team hub by using these results as your reference? The hub that the team requires may vary depending on the nature of the project and composition of team members. While focusing primarily on creating a space where members can "carry out discussions in a lively atmosphere," it may be necessary to also adapt to the team's diversity and create a space where all the members can work as a team.

Changing office space configurations, and how seats are viewed

SOLUTION



Okamura Corporation has continuously gathered basic data on office layouts of “Advanced Offices that Serve as a Guideline for Office Design” [companies that qualify for the Nikkei New Office Award*].

In this section, we introduce changes in the methods of calculating area per worker and in the types of seating today, as offices become increasingly diverse after the COVID-19 pandemic.

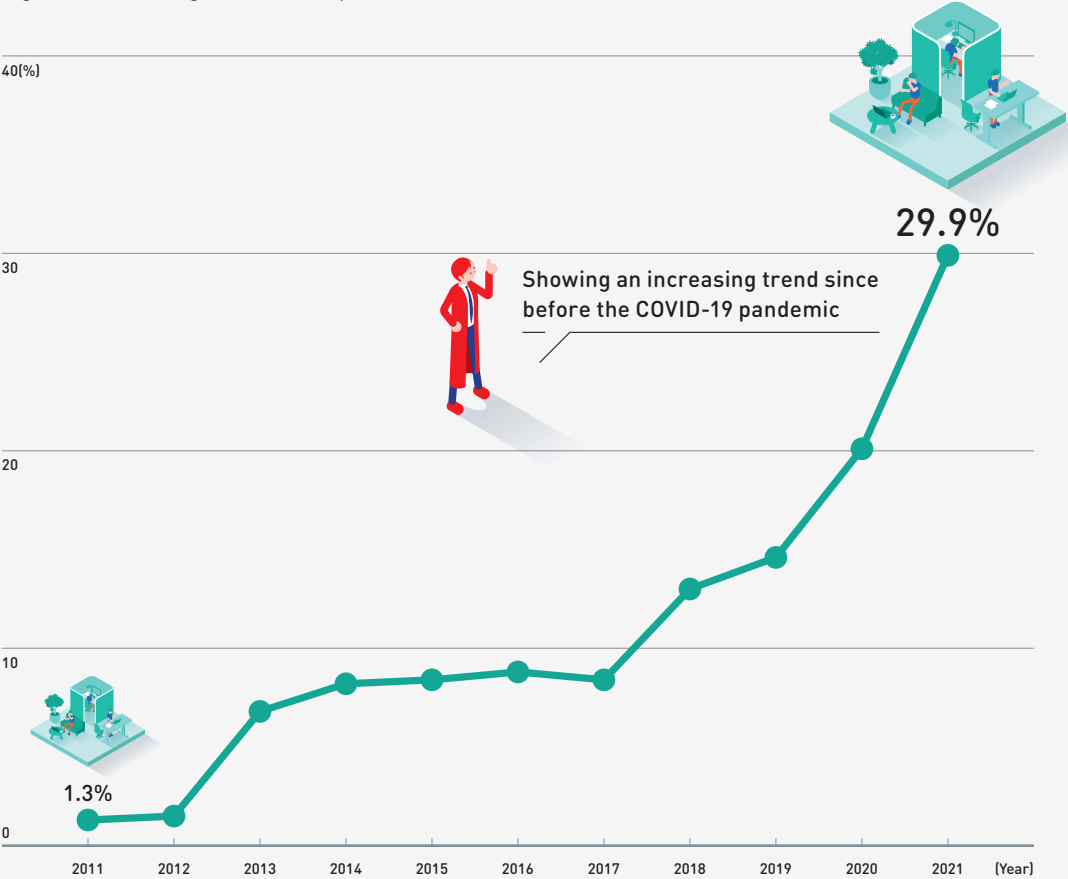
*Nikkei New Office Award
An award presented jointly by Nikkei Inc. and the New Office Promotion Association (NOPA), to offices that are full of creativity and originality, and which are recognized as models for the future.

The values for each year shown in this text are average values for the latest four years, including the data for the year in question. For example, values for 2021 are the average values collected from 2018 to 2021 for 184 properties.

SOLUTION

Popularization of ABW-adapted offices

Figure 1. Percentage of ABW-adapted offices



Source: Survey on Areas in Advanced Offices, Okamura Corporation, 2022

In recent years, the ABW (Activity Based Working) work style, which involves choosing a place to work that suits the contents of the job, is becoming increasingly widespread. The percentage of ABW-adapted offices among all the surveyed offices is on an increasing trend, and this became especially prominent after 2017 (Figure 1).

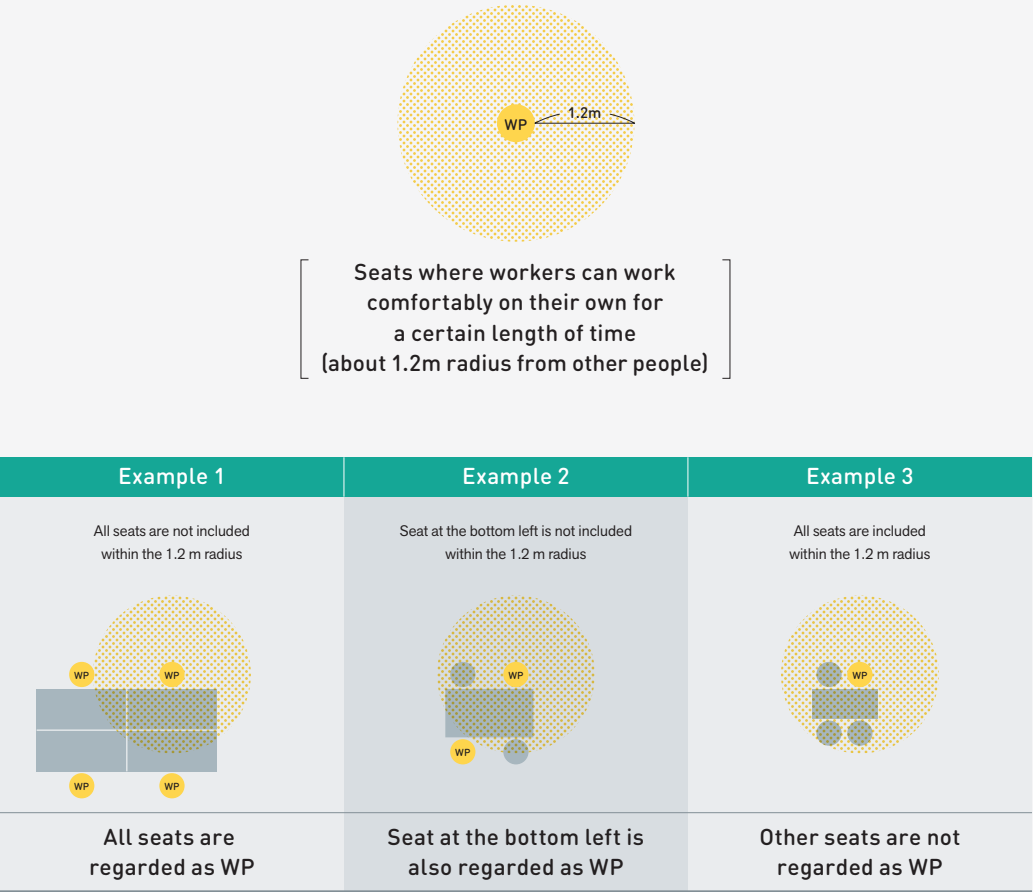
In ABW, workers choose their place for work based on the contents of work, their physical condition, and their mood that day. For example,

when they wish to concentrate on their work alone or participate in an online meeting, they choose seats surrounded by panels where they can concentrate. Conversely, if they wish to relax and do not mind others chatting with them, they choose a seat in a cafeteria or an unused meeting room.

Hence, the previous premise of doing individual work at one's desk has changed, and every seat in an office is gradually becoming a potential place for individuals to work.

Definition of work points

Figure 2. Okamura’s counting method for work points



Source: Survey on Areas in Advanced Offices, Okamura Corporation, 2022

At Okamura Corporation, in addition to desk seats, other seats where workers can work comfortably on their own for a certain length of time are regarded as “work points” (hereafter, “WP”). The method for counting WP is defined in Figure 2. The sense of distance from others is an important point that contributes to the ability to work comfortably on one’s own. As it becomes difficult to concentrate on our work when there is someone next to us, it is necessary to maintain an appropriate distance from others.

In view of that, we carried out a validation based on the theory of proxemics (personal space) propounded by Edward Hall, and set 1.2 m as the standard for maintaining a sense of distance. The figure above shows arrangements of four seats, each of which has a different number of WP—4WP in Example 1, 2 WP in Example 2, and 1 WP in Example 3.

*Reference: Edward Hall, The Hidden Dimension, 1970.
In cases where physical personal space can be maintained, such as booth seats, seats are counted as WP even if they do not meet the 1.2 m criteria.

Changes in area per person based on work points

Figure 3. Differences in number of seats due to office differences

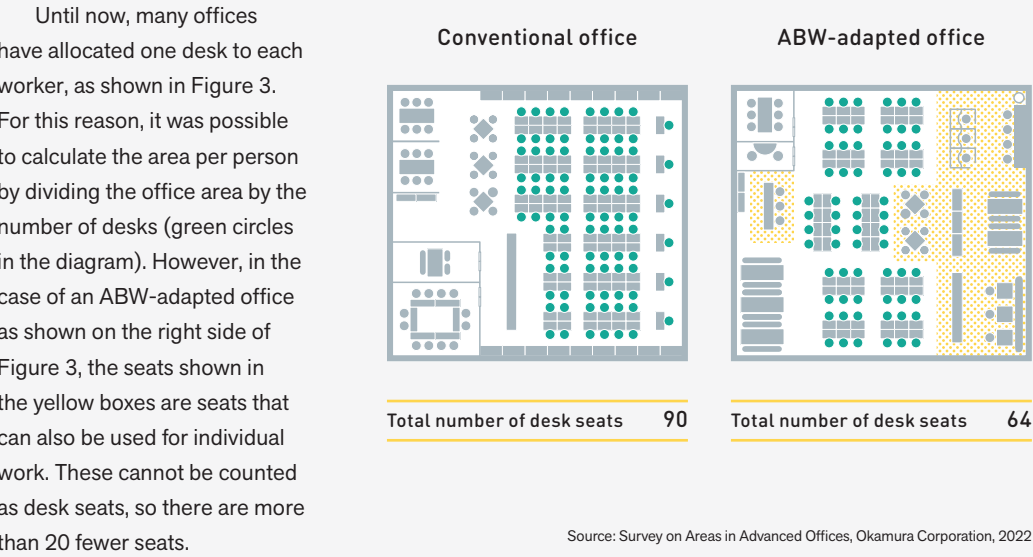
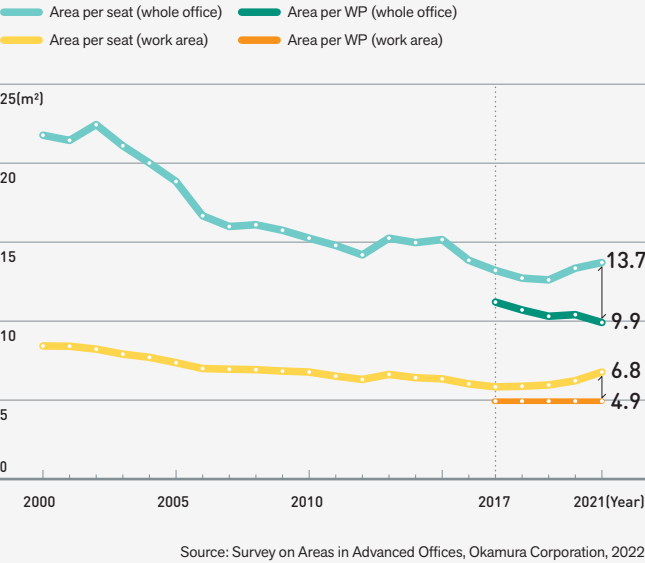


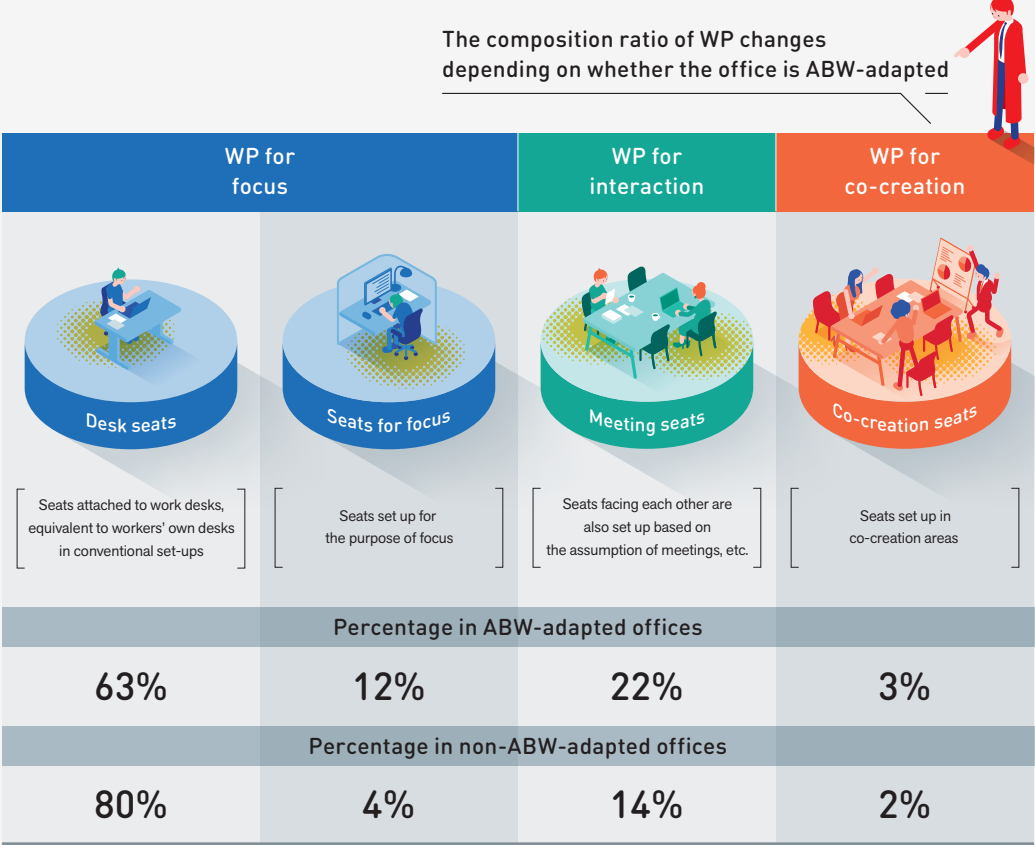
Figure 4. Changes in area per person in the whole office/work areas



When the area per person was calculated based on the number of desk seats, the declining trend that has continued for many years was reversed and started to increase from 2017. On the other hand, the declining trend continues when area per person is calculated based on the number of WP (Figure 4). This difference, as introduced in Figure 1, is believed to be due to the increase in the number of offices adopting ABW, as well as changes in how we think about seat numbers.

Three types of representative work points

Figure 5. Composition ratio of work points by office type



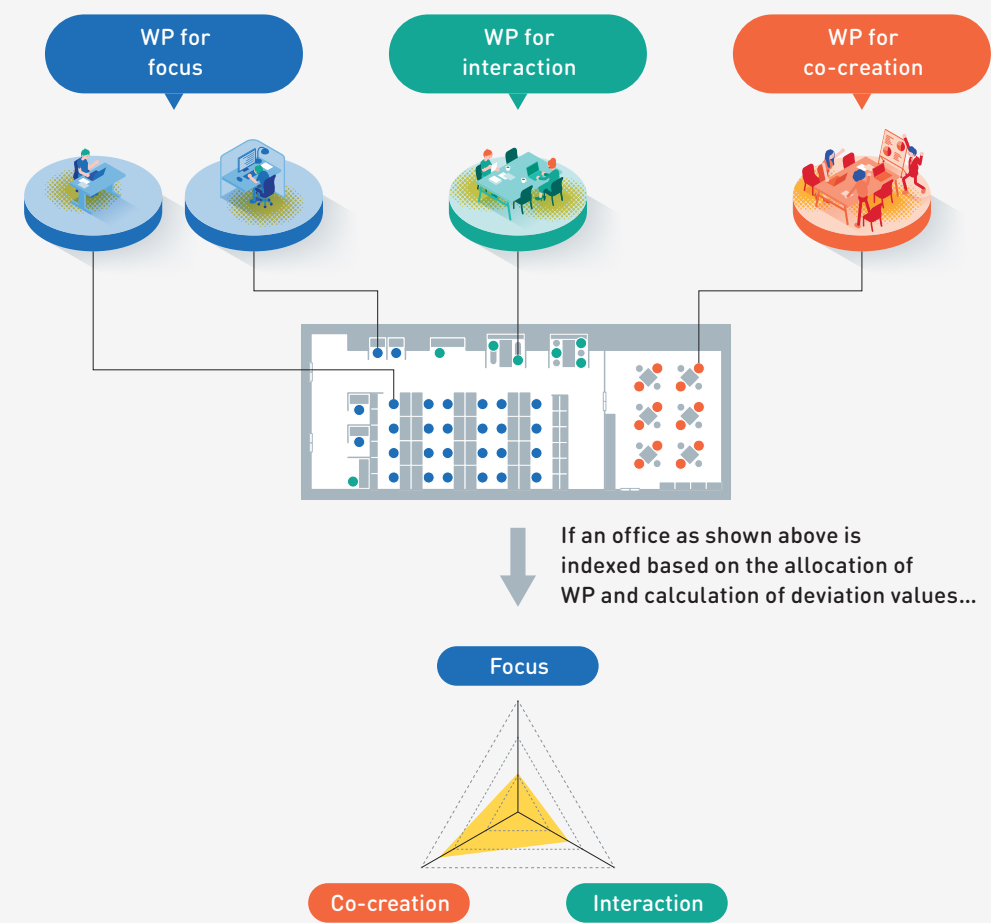
Source: Survey on Areas in Advanced Offices, Okamura Corporation, 2022

When we conducted a study on advanced office layouts, we found that WPs can be broadly split into three categories. These are: WP for focus (desk seats and seats for focus), WP for interaction (meeting seats, etc.), and WP for co-creation. Apart from these, depending on the office, there are also seats in café spaces or refreshment spaces, designed as seats that allow people to work on their own for a certain length of time. However, these have been excluded from this study as individual cases.

Figure 5 shows the extent of differences in WP configuration depending on whether an office is adapted for ABW. The difference in the proportion of desk seats is the greatest, and it is possible to verify the differences in work styles in the sense of whether one is working with the desk seat as the base, or by using various seats.

Analysis of offices by using work points

Figure 6. Analysis of office characteristics based on work points



Source: Survey on Areas in Advanced Offices, Okamura Corporation, 2022

With the spread of hybrid work during the COVID-19 pandemic, changes in work styles are taking place alongside the review of management strategies by each company. As work styles become increasingly diverse, it is likely that there will no longer be a "general solution" for how offices should be set up. We can say that we have entered an era in which we have to consider what type of office is needed to realize the company's management strategy.

If we analyze the aforementioned WP and its

categories, it is possible to classify the direction of offices based on the allocation ratio. The radar chart in Figure 6 compares standard allocation ratios based on the allocation ratios of each type of WP in the target offices as well as Okamura's database. For example, if the allocation of WP for focus is higher than the standard allocation in the target office, the value of that item will be higher. We can determine the characteristics of an office from the triangular shape shown.

Office categories from the perspective of work points



CASE STUDY

Kirin Holdings Company

Photo by Nacasa & Partners



Offices for sharing ideas and passion

Kirin Holdings Company, Limited, redefined the purpose of offices and the way they work, prior to the renovation of the Group's head office in 2022. According to KIRIN, an office is a co-creation space for creating innovation, as well as a team-building space and a space for sharing values. Rather than perceiving an office as simply a place for working, KIRIN considers it as a symbolic place where employees come together to create new values.

Based on the redefined contents, it further established and promoted the concept of a "STADIUM where ideas and passion are connected." According to Takehiro Fukui from Kirin Business Expert Company, Limited, which was involved in the office renovation, "We envisioned a soccer stadium to embody the image of the office that we were aiming to realize." Accordingly, each floor of the office was designed to correspond to various spaces in a stadium, such as "GATE," "FIELD," "STAGE," and "TRACK."

Creating offices based on the premise of hybrid work

For the renovation, various improvements were

Ideas for the realization of the concept

STAGE (Photograph 01)

A co-creation space aimed at increasing contact points between employees. Spaces that perform different functions are set up on each floor.

GATE (Photograph 02)

An entrance that helps employees to switch into working mode. The slogan of the Kirin Group is installed as a wall fixture.

FIELD (Photograph 03)

Various spaces are set up in the work area to enhance employees' productivity. A "locker room" has also been established to facilitate teamwork in a casual atmosphere.

TRACK (Photograph 04)

The main passageways in the office are intentionally designed with bends and curves to facilitate encounters between people walking past one another.





05



06

made based on the premise of hybrid work, with a focus on consolidating office floors, adopting “free address” layouts, and increasing contact points between employees when they come to work in the office.

With regard to floor consolidation, while the head office had originally occupied 5.5 floors (2F and 17F – 21F) in the office building, KIRIN took the opportunity of the renovation to consolidate these into four floors (18F – 21F). Despite a reduction of about 20% in the total floor area of the office, the work area per person was approximately doubled. The space was improved to enable employees to work even when a maximum of 50% of the Group’s head office employees come to the office at the same time.

To realize a “free address” layout, office operation that had been mainly composed of fixed seating was changed to a “free address” operation in principle, with the exception of rooms and fixed seating specific to certain Group companies and

Distinctive co-creation spaces

21F: Library (Photograph 05)
A library-like space filled with books, magazines, and other reading materials.

20F: Lounge (Photograph 06)
A space where employees can interact with one another while refreshing themselves in a café-like atmosphere.

19F: Lab (Photograph 01)
A space that facilitates diverse communication such as open meetings, workshops, and presentations.

18F: Guest Lounge (Photographs 07, 08)
A space that fulfills both functions of reception and meetings with external visitors. A raised-floor guest lounge (07) and a workshop space (08) have been installed.

departments. This made it possible to use the appropriate areas flexibly to suit the purpose of the job. At the same time, IT tools were enhanced to allow employees to check seat occupancy information from their smartphones.

To increase the contact points between employees, spaces that make it easy to conduct open meetings for team-building purposes were secured, while reducing the area of conference rooms and individual work spaces in the work area. Furthermore, the establishment of co-creation spaces on each floor naturally increased the face-to-face contact between employees.

Co-creation spaces that increase the contact points in the office

In addition to increasing co-creation spaces by about 20% compared to before the renovation, creative efforts were also made with regard to the places where such spaces are established. Installing co-creation spaces around the central staircase, located in the center section of the floor, made it easier for employees to gather.

According to Mr. Fukui, “Setting up co-creation spaces on each floor naturally makes them places where employees can come together easily. We anticipate employees from different Group companies and departments to engage in casual, unintentional communication while refreshing themselves at work.” Moreover, each floor is equipped with different functions that can be used without regard for companies, such as library,



lounges, and meeting spaces.

Further creation of innovation to bring synergy



In addition to desk seats, seats similar to those found in family restaurants, and work booths suitable for online meetings, etc. are also installed in the work floor.

The renovation also brought about changes in the purpose of employees coming to the office. The contents of and statuses of employees' work are now clearly classified into work that is carried out at home, work that is carried out in the office, and work that is carried out in the shared office. This has contributed to the realization of ABW ("Activity Based Working"), a work style that encourages employees to consider and proactively choose where to work.

With regard to the future outlook, Mr. Fukui said, "To enable the further creation of innovation and generation of synergies between Group companies, we are considering organizing events, etc. that make use of the co-creation spaces to facilitate interaction and exchanges between members of

different departments and Group companies." He also said that as employees practice ABW, they are once again pursuing their vision of "an office that people want to come to."

Employees share ideas and passion, acknowledge one another's abilities, exert their mutual talents, and generate new values. When

an office functions in this way, the outcome will be visible to us in the form of unprecedented new products.

Kirin Holdings Company

NAKANO CENTRAL PARK SOUTH,
4-10-2 Nakano, Nakano-ku, Tokyo

Takehiro Fukui
Kirin Business Expert Company, Limited
General Manager of the General Affairs Support Division



Overview of the research included in this publication, and references

Ethical Work Style

"Survey on Changes in Work Styles and Working Environment"
Survey: Okamura Corporation, 2022
Survey overview: Online questionnaire survey about awareness of work styles and working environment, conducted on regular employees (n=4,239) and managers/executive officers (n=524) of companies with 100 or more employees, based in the Tokyo metropolitan area, Chukyo metropolitan area, Kansai metropolitan area, and Fukuoka Prefecture.
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Eshikaru Wākusutairu – Jibun ni mo Hito ni mo Yasashii Hatarakikata wo Kanegaetemiru (Ethical Work Style – Thinking about Work Styles that are Good for Yourself and for Others)
Author: Koichi Ikeda
2022

Toward a society that embraces diverse careers

"Fact-finding Survey on Side Jobs, Recurrent Education, and Sabbatical Leave"
Research collaborator: Ikutaro Masaki (Tokyo Woman's Christian University, School of Arts and Sciences, Division of Psychology and Communication)
2022
Survey overview: Questionnaire survey on regular employees (n=3,192) of companies with 100 or more employees, based in the Tokyo metropolitan area, Chukyo metropolitan area, Kansai metropolitan area, and Fukuoka Prefecture.

Maintaining good health at work

"Workers' Health and Communication in the Office in Hybrid Work "
Research collaborator: TATAMI, inc.
The Japanese journal of ergonomics, 2022
Volume 58 Issue
Supplement Pages 1G1-02
2022
Survey overview: Questionnaire survey on office workers based in the Kanto and Kansai regions who use a combination of working in the office and working from home (n=500, excluding office workers who work five days or more per week in the office or five days or more per week from home)
—
[Reference article](#)
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URL: https://www.meti.go.jp/policy/mono_info_service/healthcare/downloadfiles/kenkokeieioffice_report.pdf
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[Reference book](#)
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Author: Akihito Shimazu
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Hybrid work and the environment

"Survey and Analysis of the Impact of Hybrid Work on the Environment"
Survey: Okamura Corporation
Analysis: National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan
Research collaborator: Yuko Kanamori (National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan, Social Systems Division)
2022

Survey overview: Questionnaire survey on regular employees (n=4,000) of companies with 100 or more employees, based in the Tokyo metropolitan area, Chukyo metropolitan area, Kansai metropolitan area, and Fukuoka Prefecture

Creating a team hub in the office

A Study on the Workplaces that a Team Wants to Make a Home,
Part 1:The Current Study Summary
Part 2 :Interview Survey
Research collaborators: Masaki Takahashi, Hidetoshi Watanabe (Bunka Gakuen University, Faculty of Art and Design)
Summaries of technical papers of the Annual Meeting of the Architectural Institute of Japan Hokkaido, September 2022, Environmental Engineering, pp.169-172
2022
Survey overview: Interview survey on employees and university staff (n=15) split into five teams of three members each

Changing office space configurations, and how seats are viewed

"Survey on Areas in Advanced Offices"
Survey: Okamura Corporation
2022
Survey overview: Analysis of the layout of companies (n=184) that qualify for the Nikkei New Office Award, based on data collected from 2018 to 2021
—
[Reference](#)
The Hidden Dimension
Author: Edward Hall
1970

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Toward a society that embraces diverse careers: Koichi Ikeda, Mai Morita
Maintaining good health at work: Ayumi Mineno, Haruyuki Asada
Hybrid work and the environment: Koichi Ikeda, Mai Morita
Creating a team hub in the office: Ai Hanada, Haruyuki Asada, Ryo Akinaga
Changing office space configurations, and how seats are viewed: Mitsuru Makishima, Ryo Akinaga

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